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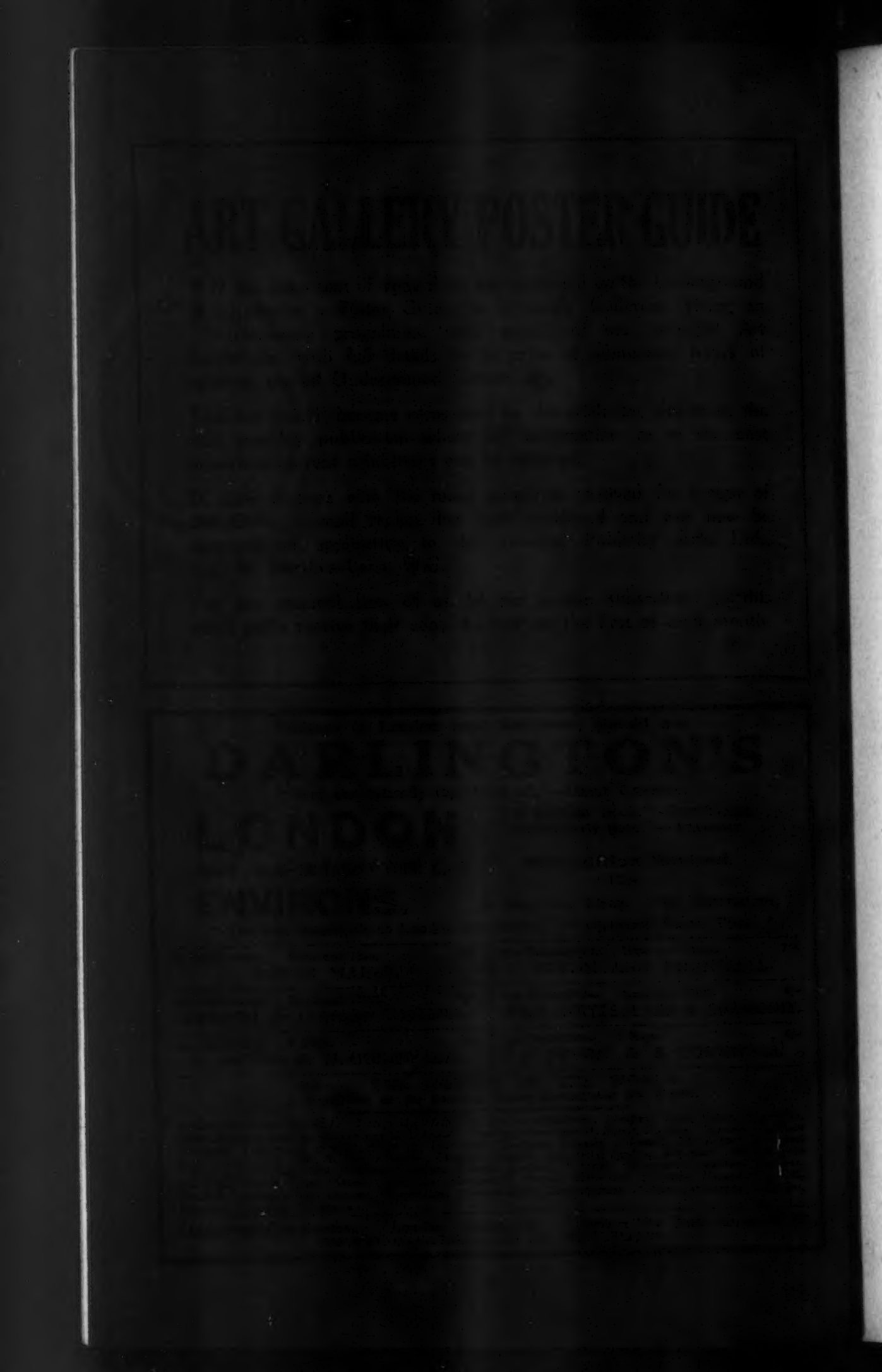
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THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

MAY, 1923.

The Vision

By Cloudesley Brereton

I.

COMRADES and pilgrims on the open road!—
  And now our paths divide,
You to the sombre city's dark abode,
  I to the lone hillside!

And yet what glories have we seen and felt
  When on the upland bare
Beside some humble wayside shrine we knelt
  In sacramental prayer!

Oh! then we knew a bliss that doth transcend
  All perishable things,
That, though long past, is with us to the end,
  And still within us sings.

For as we worshipped, as our prayer went up
  In mystic unison,
Drinking together of the self-same cup,
  Our souls were blent in one.

And mounting ever upward, their twin stream
  Into a single sea
Flowed, as our spirits shared that common dream
  Of radiant harmony.

We were at one with each, with all—the flowers
That haunt the steps of Spring,
The wild things lurking in their secret bowers,
The glad lark on the wing.

Knight-errant ocean flinging down his gage
Beside the bastioned rocks,
The cloistered vale, the wood's green hermitage,
The peaceful flocks,

The fields of laughing wheat, the mead that hems
The brooklet's devious ways,
The glittering peaks, bowing their diadems,
Joined in our hymn of praise.

The desert sands, with buried life instinct,
Earth's shafts of hidden fire,
Like whirling dervishes arose and linked
Their glories with our choir.

The lightning waved its wand. The thunder crashed,
The multitudinous rain,
Like millions of carillons, chimed and clashed,
Repeating our refrain.

And droning out their immemorial charms
The winds our anthem swelled,
While Mother Earth entranced within her arms
Our fluttering spirit held.

II.

We were at once the Many and the One
In that high selfless state,
Like rays that, issuing from a common sun,
Are one yet separate.

All barriers of flesh were swept aside,
The world within
One with the world without us in one stride
Became our twin.

THE VISION

Night doffed her sable mail; each twinkling star
  Threw down its lance;
The milky way broke up its ranks of war
  To join our cosmic dance.

Your motherhood all womankind in yours
  Gathered; each son of earth,
In me incarnate, in that hour of hours
  Attained his second birth.

As the swift spark that leaps from pole to pole
  Transforms their nature, so
Your soul did mine become, and mine your soul
  In alternating flow.

All living things clave to us. Days long sped
  Their course reversed.
The æons fled away, the rising dead
  Our psalm rehearsed.

The gods of Greece, of Ind, of far Cathay,
  Of long-forgotten rites,
Wheeled round us, centre of their new-born day,
  Like stately satellites.

Out and beyond the highest Heaven we passed;
  Evil and good fell back.
We soared like clouds of glory unaghast
  Above their fading rack.

Our teeming swarm broke through thy crumbling shell,
  Oh finite Universe!—
And sudden on our glittering myriads fell
  A darkness like a curse.

Around us stretched the drear immensities
  Of Chaos and Old Night,
With ghostly mountains, dim phantasmal seas,
  Haunt of the Infinite.

Above us towering headlands reared and reeled,
  While gulfs that naught could plumb
Yawned under us. That spectral battlefield
  Left us astonied, dumb;

Where league-long monsters locked in shadowy strife
  Engendered, fought and slew—
The pallid progeny of Death-in-Life,
  Of grisly shape and hue.

Into a night of blinding storms we passed,
  Like hapless birds were we
That, buffeted from their course, a wintry blast
  Drives o'er a trackless sea.

Intolerable anguish on us fell,
  Us outcast and accurst,
When lo! a light, serene, ineffable,
  Upon us burst.

A mystic light of love, ineffable,
  Red-petalled as a rose,
In that new realm, whereof no tongue can tell,
  Of our apotheose.

. . . . . .

Comrades and pilgrims on the open road!—
  And now our paths divide,
You to the sombre city's dark abode,
  I to the lone hill-side.

Lights of Piccadilly

By Sir Leo Chiozza Money

The night comes in, and it is passing fair.
  The azure deepens, giving blazonry
To suns that burst upon a blue more rare
  Than old Leonardo's lapis lazuli.
The ways are thronged, and London is at play;
The lamps of Heaven are very far away.

There is no wonder in the broidered blue;
  Here stars as women still are counted cheap;
Here few so simple as to make ado
  Though eyes of Heaven or earth should burn or weep.
Thus Sirius bright did shine for Babylon,
And still he shines, but Babylon is gone.

We have a notion newer than the stars,
  And lanterns brisker than the climbing moon,
We make a firmament to suit our bars
  With lively lights to match a jazzy tune.
The stars are dull, and nothing have to sell;
Our scintillations have a tale to tell.

Craned necks and eyes upturned, but not for you
  O stars inscrutable! You are too old
To feed our wonder. Give us something new,
  Meet for a mart where life is cheaply sold.
Heaven has not anything to show as rare,—
Or did forget to advertise its ware.

O good that Whisky should be thus bepraised,
  For here a girl is begging for a drink;
(Let high aloft the dazzling sign be raised)
  A little more and she will cease to think;
And thinking is not good for such as know
What brutes and blackguards flourish here below.

Volta and Faraday lived not in vain;
  Davy and Edison and all their kind
Laboured to make the Signs of Beer more plain,
  And thus illuminate the human mind.
Let what the masters gave us be applied,
And view the high accomplishment with pride.

The glaring lights the weary gay reveal,—
  The chalky noses and the scarlet lips,
The leer of invitation and appeal,
  The mincing footsteps and the swaying hips.
What sorry hunger is it that you feed?
What phantoms of desire can fill your need?

The stars forgetting, by the stars forgot;
  Deeper and deeper yet, until the mud,
The filthy mud of London, was their lot—
  To slake the fever of ignoble blood.
The stars forgetting, by the stars forgot;
But if God saw and knew,—alas! God wot!

An this be all—an this be life of men;
  If civil habit fit this common plan;
If these thy guiding lights, O London,—then
  Let swift oblivion be the lot of man!
Let not the iniquity be longer sold
Of murk for merriment and gilt for gold.

* * * * * *

But see, amid the jostle and the swirl,
  There, in the omnibus that rumbles by,
A working lover and his honest girl
  Taking their modest jaunt beneath the sky.
Little the city offers them, but they
Possess their kingdom at the close of day.

Less than a man is he, as men are bred
  Where men may do men's work, and hail the sun,
And see their fruitful labour harvested,
  And know contentment when their course is run.
Weeds of the town, this lover and his maid,
But love is theirs, and love is unafraid.

They lean upon each other, and their youth
  Is wealth enough in this their golden hour.
They dream a home together! Stars, have ruth!
  The woman is frail, and tender as a flower.
Little they ask; a little their hope would feed;
Less than a God could give them all they need.

Commerce, that lights the advertiser's star,
  Might, for a price, find housing for young love--
Some dark and frowsy tenement afar,
  Where, up the crazy stairs that lead above,
Her feet would slower mount each weary day,
And grinding penury steal her youth away.

There is no God? Then let a God be made
  Shall mark the sparrow falling, and shall know
How women work, how suffer, and how fade;
  How struggle vainly on, and presently go
Where sorrow upon sorrow, buried deep,
An end is found at last in dreamless sleep.

For you, dear little one, whose lovelit eyes
  Give trust to him whose honest hands you hold,
This God shall be a very God, and wise;
  Whose love, like yours, shall fail not, nor grow cold;
Whose care shall banish tears, save those that flood
The eyes of kindness when they witness good.

When Man awakes, and all his powers are bent
  Upon the common good, then God is made
In image of goodness. Not omnipotent;
  Nor speaking of man's debt, for all is paid;
But armed as Nature's rebel son, who wars
Upon the cruelty of the eternal stars.

No succour lies without. The fathomless cold
  No spark of pity knows. The heart of man
Is greater than the gods or new or old;
  All goodness that the gods might work, men can.
Man has his Kingdom, and its Godly throne
Awaits the sovranty of man alone.

* * * * * *

The lights of Piccadilly fade. The day
  Blots out the glitter. Grey and brown
The ugly buildings loom—the disarray
  Of shapes incongruous we call a town.
Awake! it is the morn; the night is sped;
The lights are out; we see the dirt instead.

Echo of Bradfield

By S. L. Goodman

Deep in a wood I chanced upon a space
Of open grassland, where dun partridges
And sleek, brave-coloured pheasants come to dress
Their ruffled plumage; where the squirrels race
In fitful bound, free from the bough's embrace.
Broad shafts of sunlight fill the wood's recess
With darkling shadows, 'mid th' interstices.
A sylvan silence loiters in the place.
Circlewise in a furry pollen-haze
Palm-thickets, rich with bud, stand sentinel,
Skirting the pine-trees. Emerald moss grows warm
About the tree-stumps. Hither comes no harm.
And underneath the cowslip's pensive bell
Violets hear the robins' roundelays.

Salta Pro Nobis

(A Variation)

By John Galsworthy

"The dancer, my Mother, is very sad. She sits with her head on her hands. She looks into the emptiness. It is frightful to watch. I have tried to make her pray, my Mother, but the poor girl—she does not know how; she has no belief. She refuses even to confess herself. She is pagan—but quite pagan. What could one do for her, my Mother—to cheer her a little during these hours? I have tried to make her tell me of her life. She does not answer. She sits and looks always into the emptiness. It does me harm in the heart to see her. Is there nothing one can do to comfort her a little before she dies? To die so young—so full of life; for her who has no faith! To be shot—so young, so beautiful; but it is frightful, my Mother!"

When she had finished speaking thus, the little elderly Sister raised her hands, and crossed them quietly on her grey-clothed breast. Her eyes, brown and mild, looked up, questioning the face before her, wax pale under its coif and smooth grey hair. Straight, thin, as it were bodiless, beneath the grey and white of her garb, the Mother Superior stood pondering. The spy-woman in her charge, a dancer with gipsy blood, they said—or was it Moorish?—who had wormed secrets from her French naval lover and sold them to the Germans in Spain. At the trial they said there was no doubt. And they had brought her to the convent, saying, "Keep her for us till the fifteenth. She will be better with you than in prison." To be shot—a woman! It made one shiver! And yet—it was war! It was for France!

Looking down at the little Sister with the soft brown eyes, the Mother Superior answered:

"One must see, my daughter. Take me to her cell."

Along the corridor they passed, and went in gently. The dancer was sitting on her bed, with legs crossed under

her. There was no colour in her skin, save the saffron sprinkled into it by eastern blood. The face was oval, the eyebrows slanted a little up; black hair formed on her forehead a V reversed; her lips, sensuous but fine, showed a gleam of teeth. Her arms were crossed, as though compressing the fire within her supple body. Her eyes, colour of Malaga wine, looked through and beyond the whitened walls, through and beyond her visitors, like the eyes of a caged leopard.

The Mother Superior spoke:

"What can we do for you, my daughter?"

The daughter shrugged her body from the waist; one could see its supple shivering beneath her silk garment.

"You suffer, my daughter. They tell me you do not pray. It is a pity."

The dancer smiled—that quickly passing smile had sweetness, as of something tasted, of a rich tune, of a long kiss; she shook her head.

"One would not say anything to trouble you, my daughter; one feels pity for your suffering. One comprehends. Is there a book you would read; some wine you would like; in a word, anything which could distract you a little?"

The dancer untwined her arms, and clasped them behind her neck. The movement was beautiful, sinuous—all her body beautiful; and into the Mother Superior's waxen cheeks a faint colour came.

"Will you dance for us, my daughter?"

Again the smile, like the taste of a sweet wine, came on the dancer's face, and this time it did not pass.

"Yes," she said, "I will dance for you—willingly. It will give me pleasure, Madame!"

"That is good. Your dresses shall be brought. This evening in the refectory, after the meal. If you wish music—one can place a piano. Sister Mathilde is a good musician."

"Yes, music—some simple dances. Madame, could I smoke?"

"Certainly, my daughter. I will have cigarettes brought to you."

The dancer stretched out her hand. Between her own, fragile with thin blue veins, the Mother Superior felt

its supple warmth, and shivered. To-morrow it would be cold and stiff!

"*Au revoir!* then, my daughter. . . ."

"The dancer will dance for us!" This was the word. One waited, expectant, as for a marvel. One placed the piano; procured music; sat eating the evening meal—whispering. The strangeness of it! The intrusion! The little gay ghosts of memories! Ah! the dramatic, the strange event! Soon the meal was finished; the tables cleared, removed; against the wall, on the long benches, sixty grey figures with white coifs waited—in the centre the Mother Superior, at the piano Sister Mathilde.

The little elderly Sister came first; then, down the long whitened refectory, the dancer walking slowly over the dark oak floor. Every head was turned—alone the Mother Superior sat motionless, thinking: "If only it does not put notions into some light heads!"

The dancer wore a full skirt of black silk, she had silvery shoes and stockings; round her waist was a broad, tight network of gold; over her bust tight silvery tissue, with black lace draped; her arms were bare; a red flower was set to one side of her black hair; she held a black and ivory fan. Her lips were just touched with red, her eyes just touched with black; her face was like a mask. She stood in the very centre, with eyes cast down. Sister Mathilde began to play. The dancer lifted her fan. In that dance of Spain she hardly moved from where she stood, swaying, shivering, spinning, poised; only the eyes of her face seemed alive resting on this face and on that of the long row of faces where so many feelings were expressed—curiosity and doubt, pleasure, timidity, horror, curiosity. Sister Mathilde ceased playing; the dancer stood still; a little murmur broke along the line of nuns, and the dancer smiled. Then Sister Mathilde began again to play, a Polish dance; for a moment the dancer listened as if to catch the rhythm of music strange to her; then her feet moved, her lips parted, she was sweet and gay, like a butterfly, without a care; and on the lips of the watching faces smiles came and little murmurs of pleasure escaped.

The Mother Superior sat without moving, her thin lips pressed together, her thin fingers interlaced. Images

from the past kept starting out and falling back, like figures from some curious old musical box. That long-ago time—she was remembering—when her lover was killed in the Franco-Prussian war, and she entered religion. This supple figure from the heathen world, the red flower in the black hair, the whitened face, the sweetened eyes, stirred memories, sweet and yearning, of her own gay pulses, before they had seemed to die, and she brought them to the Church to bury them.

The music ceased; began again a Habañera, stirring remembrance of the pulses after they were buried—secret, throbbing, dark. The Mother Superior turned her face to left and right. Had she been wise? So many light heads, so many young hearts! And yet how not soothe the last dark hours of this poor heathen girl? She was happy, dancing. Yes, she was happy! What power! And what abandonment! It was frightening. She was holding every eye—the eyes even of Sister Louise—holding them as a snake holds a rabbit's eyes. The Mother Superior nearly smiled. That poor Sister Louise! And then, just beyond that face of fascinated horror, the Mother Superior saw young Sister Marie. How the child was staring—what eyes, what lips! Sister Marie—so young—just twenty—her lover dead in the war—but one year dead! Sister Marie—prettiest in all the Convent! Her hands—how tightly they seemed pressed together on her lap! And—but yes—it was at Sister Marie that the dancer looked; at Sister Marie she twirled and writhed those supple fiery limbs! For Sister Marie the strange, sweet smile came and went on those enticing reddened lips. In dance after dance, like a bee on a favourite flower, to Sister Marie the dancer seemed to cling. And the Mother Superior thought: "Is this the Blessed Virgin's work I have done, or—the Devil's?"

Close along the line of nuns the dancer was sweeping now; her eyes glowed, her face was proud, her body supreme. Sister Marie! What was it? A look, a touch with the fan. The music ceased. The dancer blew a kiss. It lighted—where? "*Gracias, Señoras! Adios!*"

Slowly, swaying, as she had come, she walked away over the dark floor; and the little old Sister followed.

A sighing sound from the long row of nuns; and—yes—one sob!

"Go to your rooms, my daughters! Sister Marie!"

The young nun came forward; tears were in her eyes.

"Sister Marie, pray that the sins of that poor soul be forgiven. But yes, my child, it is sad. Go to your room. Pray!"

With what grace the child walked! She, too, had the limbs of beauty. The Mother Superior sighed. . . .

Morning, cold, grey, a sprinkle of snow on the ground; they came for the dancer during Mass. A sound of firing! With trembling lips the Mother Superior prayed for the soul dancing before her God. . . .

That evening one searched for Sister Marie: one could not find her, but after two days a letter came.

"Forgive me, my Mother. I have gone back to life.

MARIE."

The Mother Superior sat quite still. Life in death! Figures starting out from that old musical box of memory; the dancer's face, red flower in the hair, dark sweetened eyes, lips, touched with flying finger, parted in a kiss!

Frederic Harrison, Jurist and Historian*

By Sir Frederick Pollock

FREDERIC HARRISON has left with the bulk of the educated public the memory of a vigorous, accomplished, and remarkably versatile man of letters. But the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in the notice published a dozen years ago, described him as " jurist and historian." In my opinion the editor was quite right; for legal training and historical scholarship give Harrison's work a character of unity and solidity, notwithstanding its want of formal continuity, which is not to be found in ordinary collections of miscellaneous papers. Any intelligent reader—not to speak of closer personal observation—can see that by nature he was discursive. Without the control acquired through a definite line of study such a man is easily tempted to fritter himself away. Whether Harrison felt any such temptation I do not know, but certainly he acted as if guarding himself against it, imposing on himself a systematic scheme of thought and (first appearances notwithstanding) exposition, and setting strict bounds, though the space within them was large enough for even his lifetime, to the range of his activity. The art of knowing what does not matter to oneself and leaving it alone is not so easy, for anyone capable of varied interest, as it looks.

It may seem a little strange that Frederic Harrison, with all his historical tastes and his reverence for antiquity, was in practical politics a Radical. So it might be if he had been an ordinary Radical, but he was not. Our common friend Professor Saintsbury has recorded that one of the last things Harrison said to him was, " I'm a stronger Conservative than you ": and, whatever the immediate application was, there was much truth in it. The man who could write of a certain type of Radical that he had a

* An address delivered at a commemorative meeting at South Place Chapel on March 18.

ballot-box where his skull ought to be was of those who are the aversion of party managers; who declare themselves, as the case may be, Tories because they find official Liberalism illiberal, or Radicals because Conservatives occupy themselves in conserving nothing but abuses that are not even very old. In this point, and indeed in others, deep-rooted love of English country for one, Frederic Harrison was akin to William Cobbett. No one who knew him can doubt that an admirable country squire was lost in him, and a better one, in virtue of his larger humanity, than Cobbett would have made.

His common sense was revolted by the cumbrous technical machinery of English property law as he learnt to know it in the chambers of that eminent and orthodox conveyancer, Joshua Williams. But at the back of the common sense there was, whether he knew it or not at the time, good historical warrant. The complications dated only from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, being largely wilful evasions and corruptions of the older law; the verbosity was an irrelevant result of the absurd manner in which conveyancing work was paid for. A thirteenth-century English lawyer—say Henry of Bratton, whom we shall commemorate at Exeter a few weeks hence *—would be quite as much shocked by a modern strict settlement as Frederic Harrison, and, moreover, would get on very well with him on several other topics.

Indeed, if I had to name one single essay as an example of Harrison's true temper and best workmanship, it would be just his survey of the thirteenth century, which he rightly, and with fulness of knowledge rivalled only by Bryce among our countrymen, celebrated as the culminating period of the Middle Ages, when creative and constructive work was at its best. So far as I can judge, the exactness of his account is not less remarkable than its compass; and the only omission I note, if indeed one can speak of omissions where selection is unavoidable, is that of a reference to the exquisite schools of English and French scribes and miniaturists whose share in the parentage of modern art has been too much overlooked. As to another of Harrison's studies in history, the paper on King Alfred contributed to a millenary celebration

* This was done on the 5th of April.

volume, and supplemented by a discourse on Alfred's writings, I can bear witness to its accuracy and good judgment with some confidence, having myself gone over the same ground on the same occasion. Here one may note that to Frederic Harrison, as a true humanist, it did not matter whether a great man lived a hundred or a thousand years ago. All times were alike to him; and a reader must be very dull or perverse who finds dust on the Saxon chronicle after reading his praise of Alfred.

Professional and historical learning worked together to produce a most attractive exposition in the article on the opening of the Royal Courts of Justice written for the *Times*. Note, reader, Harrison's charitable reticence about the Courts themselves—outside, a solemn exercise in workmanlike but lifeless late Victorian Gothic; inside, probably the most inconvenient public building in Europe (not wholly by the architect's fault), as a long-suffering profession has learnt by forty years' experience. The same qualities are shown in the essays, perhaps more attractive to the lay people, on the history of London and of Paris; but I am to speak now of the jurist rather than of the man of letters, and of work to which only lawyers and students of political theory can be expected to attend.

Harrison lectured for many years in the Inns of Court, but published very little of a professional kind. What he did publish, however, first as a series of articles in the *Fortnightly Review*, and quite lately as a volume with the title *Jurisprudence and the Conflict of Laws*, was of sterling quality. Between forty and fifty years ago such systematic teaching of law (it was little enough) as we had in England was dominated by the so-called "analytical school" and the book which was its current formulation, one of the most unreadable dogmatic treatises ever written by an acute but narrow-minded and ill-informed dialectician. Frederic Harrison, following up and expanding in much more thorough fashion some hints thrown out (with almost apologetic reserve) by Sir Henry Maine, boldly attacked the Hobbist dogmas—it did call for some courage at that time—and showed that the assumptions were contrary to notorious facts and the conclusions, as regards any practical modern law, absurd. It may now be said, of course, concerning this piece of work, as Fitzjames Stephen

said of Bentham's on a larger scale, that it is buried in the ruins it made. But it was exceedingly well worth doing. Harrison had actually read with Maine, besides qualifying in the technical parts of the law in Joshua Williams's and John Wickens's chambers, and thus was eminently fitted to carry forward the task of historical scholarship in dissolving—that is to my mind a more exact as well as a more charitable word than shattering—the ultra-Hobbist doctrine. Lord Bryce finally cleared up the job, so to speak, a score of years ago.

Much of Frederic Harrison's lesser writing, in letters to journals and so forth, was such as only a lawyer, and a sound lawyer, could produce. (The story of his contribution to the plot of *Felix Holt* is too familiar to be repeated.) I think he was not sanguine about the possible improvement of the law from within; but he lived to see the House of Lords abolish at least one superstition which he had thought inveterate so far as the Courts were concerned. In contentious matters, legal or otherwise, his expressions were often frank even to vehemence, but there was never any personal malice in them, and although he took part in many controversies I never heard that he made an enemy in any of them. The only thing he could not tolerate was the corruption of learning by pedantry and affectation, and the slavish repetition of fashionable formulas. On that subject he would allow himself, now and again, downright fooling; but it was honest and instructive, besides being quite good fooling. He feared the face of no contemporary, and if he acknowledged any master, it was Gibbon.

Others have spoken and will speak of Frederic Harrison in other aspects. But our testimony surely converges on this, perhaps the best that anyone can desire to have said of himself: Here is a man it was good to know.

"Because of Monotony"

By Maxim Gorki

Translated from the Russian by J. Sutton-Paterson

THROWING out voluminous clouds of thick grey smoke, the daily passenger train, like some enormous beast or reptile, disappeared in the distance of the Steppes, gradually engulfed in a yellow sea of growing corn. The rumbling and noise of the train seemed to merge with the smoke in the hot atmosphere, and for some little time interrupted the indifferent silence of the vast plains, in the very middle of which the railway station, because of its isolation, aroused a deep impression of sadness.

And when the muffled, but always insistent, noise of the train had grown fainter and at last died away under the shining dome of the cloudless sky, silence once more resumed its terrible and oppressive reign, adding to the unrelieved monotony of the Steppes.

All the vast plains now looked like nothing more than yellow corn, the great arch of heaven was a luminous blue, two colours of incommensurable vastness. The dark walls of the station as it stood there in their midst looked like some strange and accidental stroke of the brush, a stroke marring and killing the wonderful picture of misery and solitude painted by some mad genius utterly without imagination or inspiration.

Every day at noon, and then at four o'clock in the afternoon, there came to the station, on their way across the Steppes, trains that stopped for four or five minutes. These precious minutes were the sole relaxation of all the station employees; they brought impressions and ideas to a set of men placed almost outside the world and securely shut away from all new emotions and sensations.

Each train seemed to contain a very multitude of different people. All these people were entirely different and all wore clothes that differed from those of the others.

They appear for a moment behind the little windows of the coaches, then they pass rapidly by, with weary faces, impatient, indifferent; the signal is given, the whistle blows, and with a nerve-racking rattle and jar they fly off again across the Steppes, far away towards the city where men and women throng in one long day of throbbing life.

To all the station employees, all those excellent men who are bored to death with the solitude, it is most interesting to see these new and changing faces; after the departure of the train they solemnly exchange the impressions they have so rapidly gained. About them lies the silent Steppes, above them floats the indifferent sky, and within their hearts they harbour obscure hatred and envy towards the men and women who every day of their lives ride by in solitude and state, speeding to some unknown place, whilst they themselves are forced to stay there, prisoners of the desert, as if living apart from life and in the terrible impossibility of seeing any new face except those they may look at enviously during the two hundred and forty seconds of each day.

And after the train has gone they remain rooted to the platform, their eyes following the black thread that so soon loses itself in the golden sea of the prairies, silent and a little ashamed, perhaps, before this manifestation of life flying before them.

They are almost all of them there: the Chief, a corpulent, red-faced personage with the moustache of a Cossack; his aide, a young fellow with reddish hair and a pointed little beard; the watchman, Luka, short, inquisitive, and wily, and one of the two switchmen, Gomozov, a taciturn person, robust and black-haired, serious to the extreme and possessed of an incredibly full face.

Near the door of the main station, squatting on a bench, is the Chief's wife, a very fat little woman who suffers extremely from the heat; in her lap sleeps an infant of about eighteen months, with cheeks as bulging and red as those of its mother.

The locomotive and the carriages disappear behind a slope as if the very earth had swallowed them up entirely.

Then the Chief turns to his wife, who is half asleep, and says:

" Well, Sofia! And is the Samovar ready? "

" It most certainly is," she replies in a sweet voice with a languid smile.

" Luka, hey there! Sweep the road. Can't you see they've filled it with all kinds of filth? "

" Ah, yes, I know, Matvei Yegorovitch."

" Very well. Shall we have tea, Nikolai Petrovitch? "

" So as not to break the custom," replies the aide.

And when the four o'clock train has left Matvei Yegorovitch says to his wife:

" Well, Sofia, is dinner ready? "

Then he gives the order to Luka—always the same order—and invites the aide to dine with him.

" Good. Shall we eat? "

And his wife replies properly:

" As always."

Slowly they walk from the platform to their little dining-room, where there are many flowers and very few pieces of furniture, where the smell of the kitchen comes to them along with the odour of the infant's swaddling clothes, and there, at last all seated at the table, they all seriously discuss what they have seen and the things that happened as the train sped past the station.

" Did you notice, Nikolai Petrovitch, a brunette dressed in yellow who was in one of the second-class carriages? There was a stunning beauty for you! "

" Not at all bad, but dressed without the least taste in the world," answered his aide.

He always spoke in a curt, sententious manner, for he believed himself to be an educated man, conversant with life. He had been to college, only think of that now! In a little notebook bound in black cloth he was wont to write the sayings of famous men, phrases gleaned from the feuilletons of newspapers, and from the books that came by accident into his hands. Never on any occasion had the Chief been known to contradict him; in all matters that did not concern the Service he listened attentively to his adjutant. The wise aphorisms of Nikolai Petrovitch's notebook pleased him especially, and he was more than frank in his admiration of them. The aide's " but " in regard to the brunette evoked a query from Matvei Yegorovitch.

" You don't think that yellow is becoming to brunettes, then? "

"I refer to her general manner, my friend, not to the colour," explained Nikolai Petrovitch, carefully selecting some preserves which he brought forth from a large crystal jar to place with infinite care on his dessert plate.

"Manner is a thing by itself," admitted the Chief.

His wife joined in the discussion, for such a deep subject as this was certainly within her scope and of direct concern to her.

But as the minds of such persons are very rarely exercised, the conversation proceeded slowly, to say the best of it, rarely penetrating to their feelings.

And through the window the silent Steppes gaze in upon them, and the sky, majestic in its proud beauty, seemed at times to smile a little indulgently at them.

At every moment freight trains arrive, but the personnel of these trains has been known to them for a long time, a very long time indeed. All of them are the usual half-asleep kind of fellow one meets with so often in rural Russia. They are terribly oppressed by the interminable monotony of the journey across the seemingly endless Steppes. Naturally, sometimes they will relate an incident that has happened to them on the way. News of this character is certainly news of a sort, but it never raises great interest or reflection; it is received and devoured very much in the same way as an epicure swallows some rare and costly dish and then forgets it entirely.

With the coming of twilight the Steppes seem to become smaller; the great and eloquent darkness of dusk rises in all directions and makes towards the station, and night falls, black and lugubrious.

The station lamps are lighted; far brighter and higher than others is that of the signal box. Around it all lies darkness and silence.

Almost each instant there is the faint sound of a bell: a signal that a train is approaching; the funereal tolling of a bell crosses the silence of the Steppes and is slowly extinguished.

A short time after the voice of the bell, a vivid light approaches the station and the silence trembles with a muffled noise of the train which rolls towards the solitary station, still as death itself and surrounded with darkness.

* * * * * *

The lower stratum of society at the station leads a life somewhat distinct from its aristocracy. The watchman, Luka, is constantly struggling against a strong desire to run off to his wife and his brother, who live in a little town, something like seven or eight versts away from the station itself. "That's where his home is," as he is constantly saying to Gomozov when he orders the taciturn, leisurely switchman to lend a helping hand in the station.

At the word "home" Gomozov always sighs heavily and says to Luka:

"Yes, you're right. The homes of all of us require care. Yes, indeed, little friend, constant care and attention."

And then the other switchman, Afanassi Yagodka, an old soldier who, as far as everyone knows, has never been in anything like a battle in all his life, ruddy, round-faced and jovial, yet possessed of teasing and malicious propensities, will say to Luka, whom he pretends to refuse to believe:

"Home—his wife! I know very well what he means. . . . Is your wife a widow? Yes, a widow indeed—or perhaps some soldier's spouse?"

"Shut up, now do, you King of the Fowls," retorts Luka with scorn.

He always calls Yagodka "King of the Fowls," because the old soldier professes a deep affection for all birds. His entire house is covered, inside as well as outside, with cages and dovecotes; within and without, all day long is heard the ceaseless trilling and twittering of many birds. When he has caught them, which he seems to do with comparative ease, the quails sing their mournful "pay your debts" to him, the starlings murmur long discourses about deep and unknown things, and many-coloured birds twitter or trill little strange secrets to the old fellow to enliven his existence and kill a little of the terrible monotony.

Taking care of them in all the time that is left to him after he has finished his work, he is wonderfully tender and careful of them all, not interesting himself in the least in his companions.

Luka he calls a snake, Gomozov a *katsap*,* and openly

* Name given by inhabitants of big Russia to those of little Russia.

terms them all " women-chasers," saying that they should be well whipped for it.

Luka gives very little heed to his words, but if by any strange chance the old soldier manages to really arouse his wrath he will grumble and curse in a most alarming manner for many hours.

" Grey barracks beast! Garrison rat! What can you understand? You spent your whole life in doing nothing but chase yellow frogs behind the empty cannons. Who's telling you to say anything? Back to your partridges—command them, order your silly fowls about! "

Yagodka, after listening to the watchman's insults, calmly goes to lodge a complaint with the Chief. The excellent Chief merely shouts that he does not want fools to come pestering him with their silly complaints, and dismissed the soldier without the least ceremony. Whereupon the good man took himself to Luka and in his turn insulted him, without in the least getting excited about it, calmly and with execrable words full of meaning, until Luka dashed off, leaving him alone to his hard-earned glory.

" What can you do? There's no getting along with that fool of a fellow! No doubt it's all most silly, but all the same, ' Judge not that ye be not judged. . . .' "

On a certain occasion the soldier answered him with a loud guffaw.

" Poll-parrot! Judge not, judge not. . . . Why, if people didn't judge one another, they'd have nothing on earth to talk about."

Besides the wife of the Chief, there was another woman in the station—the cook. They called her Arina, although Heavens above really knew her correct name. At times one doubted almost if she did herself. In age she was almost forty, and very ugly: obese, with horrible hanging breasts, always inconceivably dirty and ragged. In walking she always waddled like a duck, and in her freckled face beamed two darting little eyes surrounded by a veritable network of wrinkles. There was something submissive, oppressed, about her ill-formed person, and her fleshy lips curled out constantly as if she wanted to implore pardon of all men, throw herself at their feet, all the time without daring to cry. Gomozov spent eight months in

the station without paying any heed whatever to the cook; whenever he met her he would simply wish her " Good day! " She would reply in a like manner, and, after exchanging two or three sentences, they would each pass on their way. But one day Gomozov came to the Chief's kitchen to ask Arina to mend a few of his shirts. The cook consented willingly enough, and after they were mended she brought them to him in person.

" Ah, a thousand thanks," he said. " Three shirts at ten kopecks apiece make thirty kopecks, don't they? Thirty kopecks I owe you, eh? Correct? "

" Correct," replied Arina.

Gomozov sank into a reverie and remained silent for some few minutes.

" What district do you come from? " he finally asked the woman, who, whilst he was meditating, had been carefully scrutinising his beard.

" From Riazan," she answered.

" That's a deuce of a long way off. And what brings you here? "

" Why, to tell the truth, I am all alone . . . all alone."

" That is able to carry one yet further," sighed Gomozov.

After this there followed a long silence—a silence during which they both looked very thoughtful indeed.

" What a coincidence. I also am alone . . . yes, quite alone and entirely unfriended. I come from the district of Sergatch," Gomozov began to say. " I, too, am alone. . . . all alone. . . . Once I had a wife, yes, a wife and two children. . . . My wife died during an epidemic of cholera, and the children from something or other, perhaps because their last hour had come. . . . God alone knows, but they died all right. . . . Oh, yes, they both died. And I . . . what shall I say? . . . I was left as it were without a compass, with no one to guide me in anything I was forced to do . . . This is misfortune, you see. Simply misfortune. . . . Yes, after that I tried without the least success to establish myself once more. But the machine had fallen apart, you see; it no longer worked, and I began to go, as one might say, entirely out of my path. . . . And here we are—three years that I have dragged along in my wretchedness."

" It's bad not to have a husband," murmured Arina softly.

" Indeed, yes. I should think so. You are a widow, perhaps? "

" Unmarried."

" You really don't say so! " exclaimed Gomozov incredulously.

" Yes, upon my word, I'm quite unmarried."

" However is that of all things? "

" Who on all God's earth was going to take me? I've nothing. . . . How could I tempt anyone? If I'd have been good-looking, at least! "

" Yes," meditated Gomozov. " Yes, indeed."

And, stroking his beard, he began to examine her with a keen and searching glance. . . . Then he inquired what wages she received.

" Two fifty."

" Good. There are thirty kopecks coming to you? Listen. Hear what I am going to say to you. Come for them to-night . . . around ten o'clock. What do you say to that? I'll give them you, then we'll have tea and dance to drive away the monotony. . . . We're both so lonesome. . . . Come, won't you, now? "

" I'll come," she promised almost impatiently.

And she went away.

Later, after returning to him punctually at ten o'clock, she stayed with him until the dawn. He did not repeat his invitation or give her the thirty kopecks he owed her.

Arina came again and again of her own accord, meek and submissive as usual, and silently planted herself before him. He, stretched out upon the bed, would gaze at her, and, lolling towards the wall say, " Sit down, then."

When she had sat down he would admonish her.

" Hear what I tell you. Keep this perfectly secret. Let nobody at all know! . . . Understand? Otherwise things may become very unpleasant indeed—oh, yes, very unpleasant. I'm no youngster, neither are you. . . . Understand? "

She would nod in an affirmative manner.

When they parted he would give her some clothes that needed mending and warn her again:

" Nobody. Not a soul! "

And thus for a long time they lived, hiding their relations from everybody.

Arina constantly came to his house, in spite of all things. He usually received her with great condescension, putting on his most lordly airs, and at times saying quite frankly to her:

"How disgustingly ugly you are!"

She would smile in silence—an insipid, guilty smile, and, as usual when she left him, she would take something or other to repair.

They did not meet very often. Not by any means every night, but sometimes when he met her on the station he would say to her in a low voice:

"Come to-night!"

And Arina would go meekly enough, with a most serious expression on her wrinkled face, as if she had a most tragic and important duty to fulfil.

She would, perhaps, spend the whole night with him, and when she returned to the station her countenance would wear its habitual lugubrious expression of guilt and fright.

At times she would halt at some corner hidden, perhaps, by a tree. Here reigned night, and in the austere silence and darkness her heart would compress with a terrible fear that was at all times stronger than herself.

* * * * * *

On a certain occasion, after having seen the four o'clock train leave, the higher officials of the station organised a tea party in the gardens, before the windows of Matvei Yegorovitch's rooms, in the leafy shade of the high poplars.

It was the old hot-weather custom, and it had at least the advantage of bringing a little diversion into their lives, and for the moment broke the incredible monotony of their existence.

They would sip tea and stare at each other in absolute silence, after having at length exhausted all the subjects given them by the train and its inmates.

"It's even hotter to-day than yesterday," said Matvei Yegorovitch, handing his wife the tea-jar and with the other hand wiping the perspiration from his brow.

The woman took the jar and observed:

" Yes, but it simply seems hotter because of the terrible monotony."

" H'm . . . perhaps. . . . Really. . . . How tedious existence is! Now cards, for example, are good in a case like this. . . . But we are only three, are we? "

Nikolai Petrovitch shrugged his shoulders, blinked sleepily, and announced in a loud, clear voice:

" Cards, according to Schopenhauer, are the bankruptcy of intellect."

" Well expressed! " said Matvei Yegorovitch. " Very well indeed—' the bankruptcy of intellect.' . . . And who said that? "

" Schopenhauer, a German philosopher."

" A philosopher! So-o."

" And tell me, these philosophers . . . are they employees of the universities? " asked Sofia Ivanovna.

" It is. . . . How shall I explain it? . . . It's not quite a position, so to speak . . . but rather a natural gift. . . . Everybody can be a philosopher. . . . Everybody who's born with the habit of thinking about the beginning and the end of things. Of course, there are philosophers in the universities, but you can be one anywhere you fancy. . . . Yes, indeed, even if you happen to be employed in a railway station, as all we people are."

" And do those in the universities see very much? "

" That depends, of course, on their . . . intelligence."

" But if there were only one more, we could have started a game! " sighed Matvei Yegorovitch.

And the conversation languished.

The larks sang in the blue heavens, the linnets flitted frightened from branch to branch, until the conversation ceased, and somewhere in the house a child began to cry, slowly and without great enthusiasm.

" Is Arina there? " asked Matvei Yegorovitch.

" Certainly," replied his wife in a low voice. " Certainly."

" A queer creature," observed Nikolai Petrovitch.

" Eccentricity is the first manifestation of triviality," remarked Nikolai Petrovitch sententiously, in a dreamy, meditative voice.

" How's that? " asked the Chief interestedly.

And Nikolai Petrovitch, repeating the aphorism with

a professional air, rolls his eyes in a voluptuous manner, whilst Sofia Ivanovna says, in a languid little voice:

"How well you remember everything you've read! And here am I, who can't remember to-day whatever I may have read the day before."

"Habit," remarks Nikolai Petrovitch curtly and with a sage wag of his head.

"No, that other fellow is better. What do you call him? Schopenhauer?" said Matvei Yegorovitch with a smile. "So that whatever is young will become old."

"And *vice versâ*, for a poet has written: 'All that is new comes from what has been left by the old.'"

"The devil!—how can you remember all that stuff? It gushes from you like water from a fountain."

Matvei Yegorovitch laughed contentedly; his wife smiled with a kindly air, and Nikolai Petrovitch tried hard to hide his vast satisfaction at the compliment.

"And who said that about triviality?"

"Bariatinsky—a poet."

"And the other quotation?"

"Fofanov, another poet."

"There's a brace of smart fellows for you," enthused Matvei Yegorovitch. And with a musical voice, repeating the two aphorisms, he laughed with contentment.

It seems that the terrible monotony plays with them. For a moment it frees them from its clutches, then suddenly grasps them again in its power. Then suddenly they all become silent, suffering from the heat, which is increased by the tea they have all so liberally drunk.

In all the Steppes only silence, in the station nothing but sleepiness and the sun.

"Oh, yes, I was about to speak of Arina!" recalls Matvei Yegorovitch. "There's a strange woman for you! I watch her with something very near to wonder. She seems as if she was crushed by something—God alone knows what, though. She doesn't laugh or sing at all. Indeed, she speaks but very little to anyone at all . . . you'd think she was nothing but a piece of wood! Yet she's a wonderful worker and absolutely devoted to little Lelia, so devoted to the child. . . ."

He speaks in a very low voice and yet wishes that Arina could hear him through the open window. He knows

perfectly well that servants swell with pride upon hearing themselves praised. His wife, however, interrupts him with a meaningful rebuke.

" None of that now. I'm sure you don't know so very much about her, at all events."

Whereupon Nikolai Petrovitch, beating time on the table with a spoon, begins to murmur sweetly, as if declaiming:

" A slave am I of love,
Ah, deep is my despair,
When in love's lists I enter
'Gainst you, my demon fair."

He smiled.

" Ah, what's that? What are you saying, my little friend? She . . . ah, you've got something between you, I can see! "

And Matvei Yegorovitch laughed heartily. For a long time he laughed, and his cheeks shook whilst beads of perspiration rolled down his forehead and into his eyes.

" There's nothing so very wonderful about her," said his wife. " In the first place, she doesn't take good care of the child. In the second, have you noticed the horrible kind of bread she makes? Bitter, burned, and why? . . ."

" Yes, indeed, there is certainly something wrong with all the bread. . . . We'll have to speak to her about it one of these days. But the deuce, I didn't expect anything like this. Why, she's a regular heart-breaker, is she? Deuce take me! And who's the man? Lukachka? I'll tease the life out of the silly old devil. Yagodka? That toothless old rake, the dandy, indeed; I am hurt and surprised to imagine such terrible carryings on."

" Gomozov," said Nikolai Petrovitch curtly.

" What, so serious a fellow as that? Why, he's absolutely grave on every occasion, whether it's an important one or not. Oh-o. . . . But you're not fooling us all, are you? "

Such a shocking bit of gossip amused Matvei Yegorovitch immensely. Very soon and he was laughing in loud outbursts, tears coming to his eyes; first he spoke of the necessity of giving the lovers a severe reprimand; then he began to imagine the tender conversations that must pass between them, and exploded anew in a deafening roar.

At last he became petulant. Nikolai Petrovitch

assumed a serious face, whilst Sofia Ivanovna brusquely interrupted her husband's talk.

" The devil! It isn't me who has to pay his debts, is it? This is interesting! " continued Matvei Yegorovitch, unable any longer to contain himself.

At this moment Luka appeared, saying, perhaps not very correctly, " The telegraph is calling."

" I'm going. Give the signal to 42."

In a few seconds he was beside his aide in the station, where Luka replied to the telegraph call. Nikolai Petrovitch went to the apparatus and asked the next station, " Can I send train No. 42? "

The Chief passed through the office, smiled cynically and said, " We've got to play those devils a trick. Just to kill time and beat this damnable monotony a little bit. . . . Surely we may be permitted to laugh for once in our lives."

" Certainly that's permissible. . . . I should hope so, at any rate," said Nikolai Petrovitch, without quitting his apparatus.

For he was wise enough to know that all things appertaining to philosophy should be expressed in a curt and laconic manner.

* * * * * *

The opportunity for enjoying a little laughter was not slow in presenting itself.

One night Gomozov went to the hut where Arina, by his order and with the permission of her master, had arranged a bed amongst the old furniture and general lumber that infested the place. The place was terribly exposed and damp, and the broken boxes and casks, the tables and all the other varying objects assumed a strange and terrible appearance in the darkness of the night. When Arina was alone in the hut she was hardly ever able to sleep, and she fervently recited all the prayers she had ever known to protect her against the terrible beasts of darkness that she was sure infested the squalid enough place. She recited all these prayers in a slow and subdued voice, as though, after all, she was a trifle ashamed of saying them.

Gomozov came, and for a long time silently took her to

him, then eventually when he was tired he fell asleep. He did not sleep for long, for the uneasy whisper of Arina brought him to his senses.

" Timofei Petrovitch. Timofei Petrovitch."

" What's the matter? " asked Gomozov, not yet properly awake.

" We've been locked in! "

" What do you mean? " he exclaimed, sitting up with a start.

" Somebody came here and with some chains. . . ."

" Are you crazy? " he grumbled angrily, in his terror thrusting her away from him.

Gomozov rose, and in his haste and anxiety stumbled over several objects. At last he reached the door, and, after trying it, said in a voice full of rage and hatred, " That cursed soldier! "

Someone on the other side of the door laughed gleefully.

" Open," begged Gomozov aloud.

" What's that? "

It was the voice of the old soldier.

" I tell you to open the door at once."

" To-morrow morning," replied the soldier, and laughed.

And he went away into the night.

" I've got to get to work! " cried Gomozov in tones of mingled anger and entreaty.

" I'll attend to your duties. Don't worry."

" You cursed dog, you! " murmured the switchman, in anxiety. " Wait a while! You haven't any right to lock me up. . . . He has the key, of course. . . . What'll you tell him? He's sure to ask ' Where's Gomozov? ' and . . . Ha? . . . Answer him."

" But you must know that the order for this came from the Chief himself," said Arina in a low, despairing voice.

" The Chief! " stammered Gomozov, now terribly frightened. " Why? "

And then, after a minute of silence:

" You lie, yes, you lie," he exclaimed half in anger, half in a sort of appeal.

Arina replied with a deep sigh.

" What will all this cursed business lead to? " won-

dered the switchman, sitting himself upon some object near the door. "What a terrible disgrace for me, and all on account of you, ugly old witch that you surely are."

Doubling up his fists, Gomozov made a threatening gesture towards the place from whence the sound of breathing came. She, on her side, was careful not to say even a word.

A damp darkness surrounded them, a terrible dampness that was impregnated with the deathly odour of limestone, mould, and something acrid that was so strong that it seemed to pierce the nostrils. Strips of vagrant moonshine came through the cracks of the door. Somewhere in the distance a freight train rumbled off noisily.

"What good is this silence?" asked Gomozov in a sudden burst of temper. "What am I to do now? First you commit follies, and then you keep your ugly mouth shut! Think, devil take you! What on earth are we to do, both of us? Where can I hide my shame? Oh, good Lord in Heaven! Why, in the name of all things on earth, did I ever fall in with such a . . ."

"I implore your pardon. Your pardon, indeed I do," moaned Arina in a low voice.

"And then?"

"Perhaps they'll forgive!"

"What good will that do me, of all things? If they pardon you! Well, what then? On whom will the disgrace fall? Yes, I know, I'm not altogether a fool. It's on me that all the disgrace is certain to fall. . . . Yes, on me; naturally."

After a little pause he began to curse her again, and louder this time. The time passed with terrible slowness. At last the woman, in a trembling voice, said to him entreatingly:

"Pardon me, oh, please, pardon me, Timofei Petrovitch, forgive me!"

"You ought to be forgiven with a good hearty rap on the head," he snarled at her.

Again a long and terrible silence, lugubrious, unnerving, full of suffering and suppressed anger for the two foolish people imprisoned in the darkness.

"Good Lord, if day would only come a little quicker," wailed Arina in her anguish.

" Shut up, or I'll knock daylight into you," said Gomozov, recommencing his bitter reproaches.

Once again the terrible torture of silence fell on them. As every minute slowly passed the agony of it increased. Bitter and more bitter as the day drew nearer, the day that was to witness their disgrace. The moments seemed to go with horrible slowness, as if in some terribly occult manner they, too, enjoyed the hellish discomfort of the two people, as if they wished to prolong it to the uttermost moment.

At last Gomozov fell asleep and slept until the crowing of a rooster somewhere behind the station awoke him.

" Hey, there, witch, are you always sleeping? " he shouted to her.

" No," answered Arina with a deep sigh.

" Wouldn't you like another nice little nap? " said the switchman ironically. " Come . . ."

" Timofei Petrovitch! " implored Arina with a shrill cry. " Don't torment me. Have pity on me! In the name of Christ, the Son of God, have pity on me! I'm alone. All alone! And you, my darling, my beloved . . ."

" None of your cursed grousing and howling, and don't make yourself so ridiculous," interjected Gomozov in a serious tone to put a check to her hysteria, which had, to tell the truth, moved him somewhat. " Hush! When the good Lord begins to punish! . . ."

And anew they waited in a terrifying silence for the passing of each minute. Nothing happened to them, silence, only silence.

At last the rays of the sickly sun came through the chinks of the door, and they knew that it was morning. Someone came to the door, listened a moment and then went away again.

" Hangman," growled Gomozov, and cursed whoever it was roundly.

Another period of waiting, silent and tyrannical.

" Dear Lord, I beg you! " murmured Arina.

They both listened with all their ears, and it seemed that someone was coming near. The chain rattled, and they heard the voice of the Chief.

" Gomozov, take Arina by her pretty little hand and come out at once! "

" Come," said Gomozov to her in a low voice, a voice that had in it utter misery and despair.

With bowed head and wet eyes Arina came over to his side.

The door was opened; the Chief appeared. He saluted and said, " My congratulations to the young couple! Forward. Strike up the band."

Luka was beating his fist against an iron pail, howling something in a quivering tenor voice; the soldier was blowing his bagpipe, and Matvei Yegorovitch was making wild gestures, his cheeks puffed out, a trumpet-like sound issuing from between his lips.

Pum, pum! Pum-pum-pum!

They were all there, all of them, laughing at him and making a great festival of the pair's utter discomfort. The pail thumped, the bagpipe wheezed and wailed, and Matvei Yegorovitch laughed loudly and insanely. His aide, too, exploded with laughter when he beheld Gomozov in utter confusion, with a sinister face and a silly laugh upon his lips that trembled as he moistened them. Behind him stood Arina, half dead with shame and terror, her head hung low on her breast.

" Arina to her lover
Spoke very tender words.
Oi la, oi la, la "——

Luka sang, making horrible gestures in the direction of Gomozov.

Then the soldier approached, and, placing his bagpipe next to the switchman's ear, he played on and on mercilessly.

" Excellent. Now proceed, arm in arm," cried the Chief.

His wife was seated in the vestibule, and as she watched them she swayed from side to side, uttering piercing shrieks.

" Motria, enough, or I'll die of laughing."

" Who for a taste of the beauty's lips
Would not brave the stoutest whips? "

It was the aide who sang, almost in Gomozov's ear.

" Long live the young couple! " shouted Matvei Yegorovitch as Gomozov took a step forward.

And from the throats of them all came a loud hurrah,

the old soldier shouting louder than all the rest with a roaring bass.

Arina walked behind Gomozov with proudly raised head, her mouth open, her arms hanging at her sides, lifelessly and pitifully. As she went her eyes peered curiously before her, but it is doubtful if she saw anything—anything at all.

"Motria, order them to embrace. . . . Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bride and bridegroom, this is bitter!" shouted Nikolai Petrovitch, using the habitual phrase employed at the embracing of a newly wed pair.

And Matvei Yegorovitch had to lean against a tree, for he was so weak with laughing that his legs refused to support him.

And all the time the pail kept drumming away, while the bagpipe wheezed like a dying man, and Luka danced and sang:

"Oh, lovely Cook Arina,
You've made us a pretty thick soup,
Oi, la, la. Oi, la, la."

And Nikolai Petrovitch began once more to trumpet through his thick lips, "Pum, pum, pum! Tra, ta, ta! Pum, pum, pum! Tra, ta, ta!"

Gomozov went to the door of an adjacent shanty and suddenly, before anyone could stop him, made his escape through it. Arina was left in the yard surrounded with the people who laughed, danced, and sang madly enough around her. It seemed that they had all suddenly gone utterly mad, and that the devil himself caused them to forget everything but their madness in long paroxysms of frantic joy.

Arina stood there before them, with dirty face and trembling hands, sad and ridiculous to the extreme. No one had the least compassion or thought for her sufferings.

"The young bridegroom has gone off, and she . . . remains here," shouted Matvei Yegorovitch to his wife, pointing to Arina and bursting anew into loud guffaws.

Arina turned her head towards him, walked by the cabin, and, suddenly commencing to run, fled away into the Steppes. She was followed by the laughter and cries of her companions, who whistled shrilly after her as she went.

" Enough, let her alone. Let her get her wits back, for she will have to prepare dinner in an hour or so."

Arina went further and further into the Steppes; far away behind the land used for the railway there were acres of golden corn, where nothing whatsoever moved or spoke. She walked slowly, as one lost in thought and moody through things outside her own control.

" What's that you say? " asked Matvei Yegorovitch of the others assembled around him, who were recounting to each other the various highly amusing incidents of the farce.

Everybody laughed. Even Nikolai Petrovitch found a fairly suitable aphorism for the occasion:

" In truth it is no sin
To laugh at the ridiculous,"

he said to Sofia Ivanovna.

And then he added with an air of great importance, " No, it is no sin, perhaps, but to laugh to excess is terribly unhealthy."

Despite this, there was a great deal of laughter in all the station throughout the day, but things did not go all well with the eating, for Arina had not returned and the cooking had to be done by the Chief's wife, who, Heaven knows, knew but little enough about such sciences. Gomozov did not come out of his office until after dinner, and as soon as he was seen the Chief sent for him. He went into the Chief's office, where Nikolai Petrovitch, much to Matvei Yegorovitch's delight, asked him how he had managed to seduce the beauty.

" For its originality is surely a sin of the first class," said Nikolai Petrovitch to the Chief.

" It certainly is," assented the now composed switchman with a forced laugh.

For he suddenly began to understand that by telling the story in a manner to cast ridicule upon Arina he would escape a great deal of the discomfort himself.

And he began.

" At first we made eyes at each other . . ."

" Made eyes at each other? Ha, ha, ha! Just try to imagine, Nikolai Petrovitch, how wonderfully an ugly old witch like that would make eyes! This is delicious! "

" Well, but she did make them at me. And when I

saw that I said to myself, 'Ah, here's a pretty little lady after my morals,' and I saw that I could have a little amusement. Then she asked me, 'Have you, then, no shirts or things that I can have the great joy of mending for you?'"

"But the subtlety of the phrase was not in the sewing!"

And he explained to the Chief.

"That, you know, is from Nekrassov. Continue, Timofei."

And Timofei continued his explanations; at first he found he had to force himself, then gradually he began to believe his own lie, for in certain ways he saw that it was an extremely useful lie.

* * * * * *

And meanwhile she of whom he spoke was stretched out on the Steppes. She had gradually made her way into the depths of the sea of waving and bending corn, and then dropped down upon the earth, where she remained for a long time motionless. When the heat of the sun began to burn her shoulder that was exposed to it, she turned and lay facing it, her arms across her face, the better to shelter it against the terribly blinding rays.

Under the movement of the wind the corn produced a feeble noise, the sound that insects make on a sunny day, the noise of water passing lazily over a weir. The countless crickets chirped ceaselessly all around the woman crushed with shame. In some hidden way she thought that all the crickets must be engaged upon some terribly important business, something that on no account could be allowed to wait until the morrow. She found it terribly hot. She tried to recall long-forgotten prayers that her mother had taught her, and found that after all these years she could not. Before her tired eyes swayed in a continual dance faces convulsed and twisted with laughter, within her ears boomed the deep tenor voice of Luka and the mocking, querulous notes of the old bagpipe, together with the resounding shouts. Either this or the heat seemed to oppress her bosom; she tore open her chemise, exposed her skin to the rays of the sun, hoping perhaps that in this way she might breathe more easily. There she lay and the sun burned her skin, whilst a strange sensation wormed itself deep into her breast. She only said at times with

deep sighs, " Good God, dear God, I entreat you. I pray of you, my Lord."

For a long time she lay like this and cried to her God, but the only response that came to her ears was the dry rustling of the corn and the chirping of the tireless crickets. When she raised her head above the waves of the corn she saw nothing but its golden reflection, beyond this the high, black chimney of the water tower, and then sky, always the blindingly illumined sky without end. She knew that behind the chimney they were all laughing at her plight, at her heartbreaking misfortune. It seemed to her that she was all alone in the world, that there she was, stretched out in the middle of the Steppes, and that her God had forgotten her even. It was terrible—yes, very terrible for her.

When night came on she heard them crying for her:

" Arina—Arina—the devil himself, where is she? "

She recognised one of the voices as Luka's, the other was that of the old soldier. How badly she wanted to hear another voice, but the sound of it never came to her ears; then she began to weep copiously. The tears ran down her face and on to her bosom, yet she lacked the energy to wipe them away, and merely lay there as some dead thing might have done. Not asleep. Not awake. As she cried she thought with terrific rapidity. At last she made an effort to stifle her cries and groans lest someone might hear them and come to her.

Afterwards, towards midnight, she arose and walked slowly towards the station. Once there, she leaned against a wall of the luggage room and wept again, but this time silently. Her eyes were fixed upon the Steppes and indistinctly she could make out a freight train. At times she heard the soldier relating the story of her terrible shame and all the others laughing in chorus with him.

The night was peaceful, a moonlit night. . . . The loud guffaws echoed hollowly across the plains, and at the same moment the shriek of the locomotive whistle died slowly away.

" Good Lord, I beg of you," muttered the woman, leaning more heavily against the wooden paling.

But the sighs did not lighten the burden that lay so heavy on her heart.

The next morning she made her way into the attic of the station, and there, using a clothes line, hanged herself.

Two days after, on account of the odour of the body, they came and found her. At first they were all afraid and asked each other who was to blame. Nikolai Petrovitch demonstrated to his complete satisfaction that the fault lay entirely with none other than Gomozov. The Chief then struck Gomozov with his closed fist and ordered the switchman to shut up.

Slowly enough, God knows, the authorities began to investigate. Eventually they found that Arina used to suffer from attacks of melancholy. . . . The labourers about the station were ordered to dig a sort of grave, and in it they buried the corpse without any ceremony whatsoever, not even the burial service. Once again peace and a sort of quietness came on to the station, and all of them gave up these things for the soft transit of their own particular dreams.

And its inhabitants began to live again their four minutes a day, slowly dying of monotony and silence, of idleness and the most terrible kind of boredom. All of them followed with envious glances the trains that sped past into the distance, to nowhere at all perhaps.

And in the winter, when the tempests in some wild charge loosen their fury upon the Steppes, what with the booming of the wind and the noise of the bitter rain against the ill-made windows, life becomes lonelier and more unendurable than ever.

"Psychological Types"*

By May Sinclair

THIS is the long looked-for sequel to Professor Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*. He brings to it again, not only his special science, but that wide knowledge of folk-lore, mysticism, philosophy, and art which distinguished the earlier work. *Psychological Types* is not a book to be approached with careless confidence. Having read its eleven chapters in the order in which they stand, I recommend the uninstructed student to reverse the process. If he does not read the Conclusion before the Introduction, let him at least begin with Chapter XI. on Definitions and work backwards, ending with Chapter I. on the Problem of Types in History. He will thus advance from the clearer and simpler to the more complex and obscure. He will start in the light, and carry light back with him, and know what it is all about when he comes to the dark intricacies of Schiller and the Type Problem and the Type Problem in Poetry. And he will have no excuse for not understanding technical terms used in a peculiar and often unexpected sense.

For Professor Jung's method here is to begin with the more complicated and metaphysical aspects of his problem. Starting in black darkness, he goes on through clearer and clearer twilight to that masterpiece of luminous and precise simplicity, his chapter on General Description of Types. If the reader should be overpowered by his interpretation of Spitteler's Prometheus and Epimetheus (and Freud on Œdipus is innocent child's play beside its stupefying ingenuity), let him cease to struggle and turn to Chapter X., when he will be rewarded. He will even be able to understand what Professor Jung says about Prometheus and Epimetheus and Pandora.

In Professor Jung's mythology Prometheus and Epi-

* *Psychological Types*. By Professor C. G. Jung. Translated by Dr. H. Godwin Baynes. (Kegan Paul, 25s.)

metheus stand respectively for the introverted and extraverted man, and Pandora for the " creative phantasy " that reconciles their opposites. He divides mankind into these two outstanding types: the introvert, whose consciousness is turned in towards the subject and the subjective aspects of things, and the extravert, whose conciousness is turned outwards to the world of objective reality. You must be one or other; there is no middle way except the state of mystical absorption in God, mystical deliverance from " the pairs of opposites." You may think you are an evenly behaved person, with an impartial attitude to both aspects, but you are not. Impartiality and even balance there is none. One or the other must predominate, slightly or excessively. If this were all, the problem would be simple. But there is compensation. Each type contains its " inferior " opposite repressed " in the unconscious." Every extravert is an unconscious introvert, and every introvert an unconscious extravert. Hence, in extreme cases, there is conflict, which may end in neurosis or even madness, if unresolved. The more pronounced the type, the fiercer the insurgence of the repressed " inferior function." Each one of us would be torn to bits between the conscious and the unconscious, ground between the upper and the nether millstone, but for a psychic mechanism which holds these opposites in check. This mechanism Professor Jung calls the " creative phantasy."

" Phantasy it was and ever is which fashions the bridge between the irreconcilable claims of object and subject, of extraversion and introversion."

It is the source of the " symbol " which plays such a tremendous *rôle* in Professor Jung's psycho-analytic theory and practice. Readers of his *Psychology of the Unconscious* will remember that the symbol is part of the collective heritage of the race; it is as old as the oldest myths.

" Humanity came to its gods through accepting the reality of the symbol, *i.e.*, it came to the *reality of the idea* which alone has made man lord of the earth."

Its sensuous content, the image, is born underground, in the unconscious, but the image has *meaning* and its meaning is capable of rising into consciousness; it is rich

with associations in the luminous upper air. Thus the symbol stands in both worlds, it is the bridge between the conscious and the unconscious, between the dark primitive instincts and the enlightened intellect. It is thus the mediator and reconciler, the healer of psychic strife.

"The symbol lives through the holding back of certain libido forms, and then in its turn becomes an effective control of these libido tendencies."

This is clearly shown in psycho-therapy through the analyst's interpretation of the dream image, when the hidden source of the neurotic " complex " is drawn into the redeeming light.

The two predominant types, the extravert and introvert, are further subdivided by their " functions," as thinking, feeling, intuitive, and sensation types. And here Professor Jung's characterisation is masterly.

The trouble begins when we ask what and where, on this scheme, is truth? There will be no whole of truth, only the half-truths expressed by the two mutually opposing attitudes. And God? God also is purely relative. In fact,

"God is not even relative, but a function of the unconscious, namely, the manifestation of a split-off sum of libido which has activated the God-*imago*."

What would Professor Jung's mystics say to that?

And metaphysicians will quarrel with his view of the Platonic philosophy as an " introverted " system. If ever there was an extraverted philosophy, it was Plato's. No realities could be more objective, more utterly removed from the subject's inner world than the Platonic Ideas, those eternal " patterns " of things, " laid up in heaven." Indeed, it may be said that introversion, as we understand it, was unknown in Greek philosophy; it is an essentially modern concept.

Again, it is not easy to divide up æsthetic types into the introverted and extraverted. For reasons too complicated to be given here, Professor Jung identifies the romantic with the extraverted and the classic with the introverted type. But how about realism, which is romanticism's opposite and yet unmistakably an extraversion? And surely neo-classicism is no less extraverted,

springing from a tradition external and foreign to the modern spirit?

And it is not sufficiently explained how the superior and inferior functions, the dominant and the repressed attitudes, are reconciled in the ordinary normal individual who is not a mystic, a poet, or a psycho-analyst; how, apart from its *rôle* in morbid psychology, the symbol *works*. The book is packed with splendid generalisations drawn from an immense experimental knowledge, but this reader would have been grateful for a few more concrete examples here and there.

One slip may be noted on page 30, where ὁμοούσιος is translated " like unto " for " of the same substance with."

Dr. Godwin Baynes is to be congratulated on his brilliant and scholarly rendering of a most difficult original.

The Modern Home (ii)

[A series of four articles contributed by members of the Design and Industries Association, and expressing the views of that body on the planning, decoration, furnishing and equipment of the modern home.]

Colour and Decoration

By G. S. M.

THE function of modern house decoration is to allow us to live with our surroundings on terms of intimacy, peace, efficiency, and beauty, and not on terms of subservience.

Thus nearly all modern decoration consists of the art of selection and arrangement, not of ornament applied or devised.

This is the logical outcome of our age and a necessary reaction from the tortured exuberance of a generation ago —at least one can but suppose that it *was* exuberance which led people to believe that they were perfectly sane and justified in having "Chippendale" drawing-rooms, "Jacobean" dining-rooms, "French" (period usually unknown) bedrooms, and even "Eastern" smoking-rooms —how else can one explain this chameleon propensity in our forbears? But now we look back with horror or amusement at their rooms, overcrowded with countless meaningless ornaments and hung with innumerable patterned materials of different colours, periods, textures, scale and design—all frequently crowded into one room. We are thankful that it has fallen to our lot to be born in a younger generation which finds its beauty in a sterner ideal, a stronger vitality, and in some of the simpler things of which the same types have been regenerated in most of the great periods of decoration.

There is still far too much overcrowding, too many pictures painted, too many ornaments devised, and too much furniture pushed into most of our rooms; but there is a very distinct tendency to realise the economic necessity

and ideal of our times to put away childish things and to concentrate on beauty of proportion, space, simple masses of colour, and not on what is called, by some art students at least, " design "—design is a splendid word, but it has become degraded, just as the word " artistic " has, and will have to go through the fire of austerity before it will find its true use again.

So modern decoration differs from that of the last generation chiefly by this use of colour in plain masses, and by its tendency towards the absence of the use of pattern.

Where we use pattern at all, we try to use it in some position where it will be subjected to a constant change of light, possibly of form—as, for instance, in curtains, which when they are opened or closed alter their massing of vertical shadows, and change not only their colour and tone, but even the pattern itself. In a less degree pattern is changeable, or rather seen in varying ways, when on sofas or chairs. Here the pattern is placed vertically and at the same time horizontally, so that normally the seat appears foreshortened, or if one looks at it obliquely one has still greater difference of effect. It is perhaps well to insist on these variations, because pattern is a thing of which, however good it is, one almost always tires at some time or another; so for this reason it should be used sparingly, having regard to the fact that by its mere richness of surface it is more striking and carries more weight than do its plainer surroundings. So we must treat it discreetly, as a jewel, realising that a jewel is a beautiful thing when it sums up or concentrates the colour and enrichment of its setting. But to be hung all over with jewels, or to use pattern or ornament in too great profusion, is a misconception of its proper function, and minimises its fitness for use. No pattern has lasted in favour throughout the ages, and though the simpler arrangements, such as " diaper," can be found among the very earliest Coptic weaving, and on the looms of to-day, still there is no pattern which has always been in regular use.

It is interesting to note that as long ago as 1909, in an admirable article entitled " Ornament and Crime," Monsieur Loos gave the results of his investigations in the use of ornament among the peoples of Europe. He

found that, as a rough generalisation, the further people advanced in civilisation, the less need they had for ornament. He instanced the fact that as we progressed in years so we progressed in our desire for simplicity too.

Compare even the really luxurious wares sold by the most expensive shops in the Rue de la Paix. There one can find an admirable restraint in the use of pattern, and it is there possible to buy a bottle of scent of really beautiful proportion and shape with no added ornament, whereas in the shops of the cheaper quarters all the articles *de luxe* are covered with trails of roses or mermaids or some other ornament. This simplicity, which is so difficult rightly to achieve, is the most hopeful tendency in the best of our modern buildings. These now rely for their beauty chiefly on proportion, mass, the relation of fenestration to support, and not on carved keystones or swags of Paradisiacal fruits. This is what makes for the clean, wholesome look of a modern factory, where the architect has allotted every shilling to the efficiency of his building, and where there has been of necessity a rigid economy of ornament—perhaps some plain mouldings have given the eye a pleasant lead horizontally or vertically, as the architect wished; but there is no wallowing in a maze of features. Our age must rid itself of this welter of styles and superadded riches in order to be able to taste the nobler, stronger beauties which are even now ready to blossom vigorously or shape themselves as the expression of our time.

So the best and most effective houses of to-day are those which are decorated with colours and materials as perfectly fitted for use in their surroundings as can be found by reason and genius going hand-in-hand. Most English houses, certainly most London houses, need light, and yet more light, reflected from as many surfaces as can be conveniently so treated. Indeed, the white paint age was an admirable ideal for a great many places, especially when we all had a small army of servants; but to use white paint now, indiscriminately, in our post-war houses is very often an error in a sense of proportion.

White paint is still the best possible colour to use in a great number of places—in hospitals where surgical cleanliness is essential: here nothing can be substituted for it, because it is necessary to be able to *see* that everything

is scrupulously clean, and white shows up each mote. Then, too, in small rooms with little windows, or where a borrowed light is providing the major part of the lighting of the room, something has to be sacrificed—it must not be the light, for every ray will be valuable. On the other hand, there are many exceptions to the white paint rule, for to have to sleep in a perfectly white bedroom is most disconcerting, and it is found more comfortable to have a darkish ceiling and unreflective paint. This does not distract the sleeper, and the windows and curtains can be opened wide without a glare being reflected.

There are other obvious generalisations which can be made, such as that most rooms facing north should have a very distinct warmth in their walls and ceilings—always remembering that unless the ceiling is very high it is from this that most colour is reflected, so that the value of a coloured ceiling is more than the same tone on the walls. Most English houses look better with the colour taken right over walls and ceiling alike—one more unification which is invaluable in smallish rooms. Doors should be treated as far as possible as parts of the walls, not as holes or pieces of furniture. Grates and fireplaces, which are so often, unfortunately, entirely bad, should, if this is the case, be mercilessly scrapped. It is extraordinary what can be done with plain reeded iron backs and concrete hearths, to give an example, to improve the miserable gimcrack fireplaces that one finds in the average middle-class house of to-day. Fireplaces that would disgrace a scavenger are still broadcasted throughout the land.

Skirtings seem best in dark colours or a good black. This gives weight to the lowest part of the room and a sense of stability; it also has the advantage of not showing the knocks and scratches which it seems are a necessary part of a housemaid's daily toil.

Of the staircase, the treads and risers can often be a gay colour, as the carpet must almost necessarily be either grey or darkish, for the staircase usually leads off the hall, and there muddy boots congregate.

Kitchens should always be treated with light shiny paint. The dresser knobs and the edges of the shelves might have some bright colour on them if it were so wished, while the floor should not be composition, as one would

suppose, but linoleum or boards for preference, with the floor well ventilated underneath. Composition floors have no resilience and are very tiring to work upon for any length of time.

So the principle is evolved that the things which last the longest should be the best and the simplest. Furniture lasts for many generations; it should be chosen with great care and it should have no marked eccentricities such as characterised so many otherwise good pieces of furniture only twenty years ago. Most people can remember a perfect epidemic of hollow hearts fretted in the sustaining splats of chairs and bedsteads. After the hearts there came the diamonds, and there are still many examples to be seen of otherwise excellent, craftsman-like furniture riddled with these tokens. Sometimes it is possible to take out the offending member and replace it with a reasonable piece of wood, which will do its job in a more efficient manner. But what a curious state of sentimentality our parents must have passed through to tolerate these ridiculous ornaments. Let us avoid these traps.

The furniture chosen, as little as possible, but each piece reasonable, beautiful, efficient, we next can choose the carpet. This in a small room should be as far as possible plain, and neither too light to show marks of ordinary wear, nor too dark to absorb our precious light. A patterned carpet is valuable in a room where half-grown-up children have not yet learned to eat with the precision of their elders, but as far as possible plain, rich colours or subtle, neutral greys, according to the way in which the aspect, furniture, use, and general circumstances dictate. Oriental carpets are still very much sought after, but seldom are the best possible with our English furniture and comparatively low rooms.

But where we may well depart from austerity—allow ourselves to be frivolous even—is in our curtains. These obviously will not last a lifetime, and it is usually found that in towns it is not very satisfactory to have expensive curtains, as the constant necessary cleaning shortens their lives. So that a certain amount of latitude can be given to one's tastes or eccentricities, always bearing in mind that the smaller the room the closer together everything will necessarily come; therefore, the less

emphasis should be given to pattern. If a room has a patterned wallpaper, *and* carpet, *and* curtains, none of them will have any chance of establishing their beauty—they will cancel each other. Even more, if one is the fortunate possessor of some treasured object—a vase, a statuette, a precious casket. It is almost essential to take this as the *point de départ* and work everything up to restraining the use of pattern altogether. Concrete examples are difficult to describe because no two people will visualise with the same eyes. But to hazard fortune and take this casket for a moment: if it were made of ivory it would be well to avoid putting any very reflectively bright silks near it, as the subtlety of its surface would be " lost " by conflicting with the brightness of the silks; or if the casket were of mother-o'-pearl, it would be well to keep strong colours away from it, in order that its opalescence should have its full value in the scheme of the room.

These are only details. The main thing in our climate is to get light and keep it reflected, yet not to burden the housemaid with the unnecessary labour which unlimited white paint entails, nor to offend our eyes with an impossible standard of immaculate cleanliness. It would be better, in passages where there is constant traffic, to use some wholesome colours combed frankly one over another, giving an effect of gaiety and yet fulfilling the practical proposition of being as fit for use as was the old graining, but without the deception of the sham. This " colour combed " surface wears well, and does not show the little scratches too conspicuously; better this than a whiteness which will be a snare and a delusion to the mistress of the house.

In this manner one can go through the rooms of the house, and though one would think there might be the choice of a thousand ways of doing things, yet when it comes to the actual doing one finds that a sense of inevitableness steals through one. The first consideration in dealing with the decoration of a house is the expression of one's own personality. Then there is the character of the country, of the house, of the rooms; of each room and its relation to the rooms and passages off it; its aspect, its surroundings, its outlook, its architectural proportions, its details, its unchangeable features, both coloured and colourable; the cost

allotted, the probable duration of the scheme, the lighting, the necessary new furniture, the existing furniture that has to be used up—and by the time one realises that there is really very little doubt as to how to treat the house inevitableness settles over one. This inevitableness is stronger than oneself; it possesses the decorator, and it is for this reason useless to argue with people who seek to trap one into talking of "originality." Originality comes naturally into existence by the fact that no two houses can be alike, as no two personalities are alike; but to search for originality is deliberately to avoid doing the best obviously possible. It is true that a certain amount of emphasis can be made to cause a legitimate surprise, but that is as far as originality should go in decoration. Our aim should rather be, in its largest sense, the efficiency of beauty, the beauty of efficiency, in the arrangement and colour of our houses.

Is Britain to Live?

By John E. Grant

When the object is to raise the permanent condition of a people, small means do not merely produce small effects; they produce no effect at all.—JOHN STUART MILL.

IT is too readily assumed by unthinking people that the general prosperity which obtained during the Great War and for nearly four years afterwards was fictitious. Much of it was real prosperity brought about owing to purchasing power having been widely distributed among the population. The general purveyor or universal provider knows by experience that his business does not succeed best when potential customers for the most part are poverty-stricken and a few are very rich, but rather when wages and salaries generally are at a high level.

The reason is not far to seek. The biggest glutton, no matter how well off, can only eat a limited amount. The navvy can eat more than a man engaged in a sedentary occupation. The factory girl has a better appetite than most millionaires. Reduce the wages of labour, therefore, throughout the country by, say, a pound a week, and the home market for ordinary commodities is immediately lowered to the tune of about £500 millions per annum. Actually wage reductions since the Armistice have reduced the purchasing power of the masses more than twice this amount, and experience has shown that no nation can make itself prosperous by cutting down the reward of labour towards the standard of living of the slave. It is thought by a number of people that this limit in Great Britain has been passed in many cases, and that the material lot of the wage slave is worse than that of the chattel of bygone times. It cannot be insisted upon too much that high wages and salaries, *ceteris paribus*, connote national prosperity.

The factors which necessitated the recent reductions in the reward of labour were not primarily foreign competition and greed on the part of employers, many of whom

have resisted wage cuts because they recognised that poorly paid men produce poor work. The potent factors were the increased imposition of rates and taxes added to the increased cost of raw materials, which were rendered scarce and dear by the growing speculative dealings in land (including in this latter term all minerals and natural resources). These discouragements in production and internal exchange were not all. External exchange has been badly cut up by the duties imposed under the provisions of the Safeguarding of Industries Act, one of the most mendacious measures of modern times. A more extended study than can be given here of the influence of the tariffs recently imposed will reveal that they harm, not only business as a whole, but actually the very industries they are fondly supposed to safeguard. Each " protected " industry shrinks in time until a few firms remain locked together in a trust and all progress ceases. A few persons in the " protected " industry are enabled to profiteer, and the many engaged are " busted."

All taxation on labour products is eventually reflected in higher prices. The increased taxation on incomes and on savings by way of death duties, the spiteful amusement and luxury taxes " to pay for the war," all simply tend to widen the hiatus between potential demand and supply. The result is seen in the narrowing of the home market, and hundreds of thousands of producers become unemployed to be a charge upon those remaining in employment. These latter have to work harder and accept less remuneration in consequence. Wages and salaries are reduced within the vicious circle of what is nothing more or less than Communism, although it may not be recognised as such.

With the same point of view as the orthodox Communists, our statesmen said that the millions poured into the lap of Government had little to do with the distress prevailing in the country. " It was all in the family," said Mr. Lloyd George. Mr. Bonar Law said quite seriously in the House of Commons that money paid as taxes afterwards returns to the nation to fructify industry, and it is noteworthy that no one disputed this extraordinary statement in Parliament. It is quite true that when a man's pockets are picked the money may perchance return to him, but only after he has earned it again in some way. The

" interest " returned to the moneylenders of the Consolidated Fund Services, amounting to £380 millions per annum, rushes mainly to the head of the body politic, tending to produce national apoplexy. The remainder of the nation suffers from pecuniary anæmia, and civil convulsions bring about political revolutions.

Manufacturers and farmers must " pass on " heavier rates and taxes or go out of business, and the same applies to the wholesalers, distributors, and retailers. The foreigner does not pay import duties, as the ignorant tariff apologists would have us believe. The consumer must pay or do without.

It is said, however, that the Government must have money. Over £314 millions are required in the current year to maintain an unproductive brood under the heading of Civil Services, and although a cry of " Anti-Waste " has been raised, it has not been backed by any constructive proposals. The expensive Geddes axe has been thrown away in disgust after a few blows at the gritty roots of the bureaucratic jungle, and comparative tranquillity reigns within the maze at Whitehall!

It has been found by employers that they could not collect sufficient taxes for Government, continue to pay good rates of wages, and sell at a price against competition to meet the diminished pockets of consumers. In the case of the coal, shipbuilding, and steel industries, those engaged have been hit in an exceptional way by the Treaty of Versailles. The Reparations Commission directed among other things that Germany should hand over millions of tons of coal free to France, and build free ships for the Allies. These particular industries in Great Britain have suffered collapse, and although the coal industry has recently benefited by the mad action of the French in the Ruhr, shipbuilding and kindred trades are practically at a standstill, apart from the work on useless super-Dreadnoughts.

It was easy to pull down wages and salaries because, in the presence of so much unemployment, the alternative was a starvation dole or nothing at all, in the event of refusal to accept the jobs that were offered. One of the most interesting features of the wage reductions lies in the fact that, just as the wages of skilled trade unionists lagged behind those of the lesser skilled workers when advances

took place during the labour shortage in war-time, so when wages have been reduced it is the skilled workers in general who have suffered most.

The following table * shows approximately to-day the average position, taking the community as a whole:—

	Pre-war.	Now.	Equivalent Pre-war Value.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Miner	40 0	52 0	30 0
Steelworker	40 0	48 0	27 6
Shipwright	41 6	48 6	28 0
Engineer	39 0	56 0	32 0
Tailor	40 0	70 0	40 0
Baker	32 0	66 0	38 0
Shop assistant	30 0	60 0	34 6
Compositor	35 0	80 0	46 0
Railway porter	21 0	53 0	30 6
Carter	25 0	53 0	30 6
Dustman	27 0	63 0	36 0
Tramway driver	30 0	58 0	33 6
Agricultural labourer	18 0	25 0	14 6

It is a melancholy fact that trade unionists in mines, shipyards, and engineering shops are now from 20 to 30 per cent. less well off than they were before the war, taking the index figure at 74. In the mines, shipyards, and auxiliary trades and occupations the proportionately lower wages is partly explained by the repercussion given to those industries by the reparation arrangements under the Treaty of "Vengeance."

One of the greatest dangers to civilisation is the foolish idea that in the nature of things a master class must of necessity exploit the rank and file of labour in order to obtain a reward for service and enterprise. From the correct point of view all are partners, and wages should be regarded as in the same category as profits. Too many employers look upon their employees merely as an unfortunate item in the cost of production; while too many employees behave like discontented slaves without any more interest in the business in which they are engaged than what is known as a living wage. Wealth producers, rank and file, do not think audaciously enough. All of them are inclined to look upon a spendthrift, top-heavy Government as a necessary evil, much as the one-time chattel slave regarded his owner. When Mr. Lloyd George said

* Based upon figures recently supplied by Sir Frederick Henderson, ex-President of the Shipbuilding Employers' and Engineering Federation.

that the Government was entitled to tax what it liked (as though Government owned us all) there was no protest from industry, Capital or Labour.

It is owing to this strange mentality that the influence of taxes on labour products is not seen in its true malignity. It is widely taught that high prices are due entirely to the cost of labour, and it is forgotten that a higher than economic price may result from insufficient supply, while a lower than economic price may result from insufficient demand. Even at the low, real wages prevailing in the shipyards, the prices offered per ton for new ships are lower than economic, and were wages reduced to pre-war *figures* shipbuilders dare not fill their yards with ships, even if orders were available, at present prices.

The reason for this has been given. It is to be found mainly in the increased toll on natural resources and the increased taxation passed on in the cost of transport, and in the prices of what are raw materials to the shipbuilder. Rates and taxes to the shipbuilders themselves are well above 100 per cent. higher. Coal and power, although miners' wages are so low and coal for industrial purposes is subsidised at the expense of the householder, cost from 60 to 70 per cent. above pre-war, and this item is an increasing one. Machinery and accessories range from 80 per cent. to 120 per cent. above pre-war.

The lesson afforded during the past few years has not gone home as it should, because a broad enough view has not been taken. It is stated that agriculture does not pay, as though it were the only industry that does not pay. No industries can be said to pay, even those paying heavy dividends to a few monopolists, so long as the rank and file are on the verge of penury and there is involuntary unemployment.

The position with regard to agriculture is much as it was a hundred years ago. The following extract is taken from *The Times*, December 16th, 1822: " Sir T. B. Lethbridge, Bart., has at this time no less than thirteen farms on his hands for want of tenants. Very liberal abatements from former rents have been proposed, but such is the state of agriculture at present that the amount to be abated is less a matter of consideration than whether it is prudent to engage to pay any rent at all! Several large farms

in this county, which a very short time ago made a respectable figure on the rent-roll, are now pronounced to be unavailable for profit at a peppercorn rent; and an agriculturist upon whose judgment and veracity we can rely has assured us that an estate, a few miles from this town, which cost the present owner upwards of £25,000, would now be dearly rented at £200 per annum.—*Taunton Courier.*"

During the Napoleonic wars farmers did well, as they did recently; but heavy war taxation destroyed the home market. The futility of tariffs is shown by the fact that agriculture then was "protected" by the Corn Laws. Tariffs were raised, but the effect was further to narrow the market, and the high cost of food stood in the way of the development of manufacture. In those days, as is really the case at the present day, the production of food and the welfare of the working farmer and labourer did not enter into the calculation so much as the production of high agricultural rents. Speculation in land, then as now, had rushed up the price of land, and owners and mortgagees were most interested in getting a return on their investment.

Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley, in a valuable brochure issued by them recently, cite the case of "an agricultural estate of some 5,500 acres in a southern county, the owner of which was in receipt of an income of barely £2,000 a year from it. The property realised a total of £193,000.* Allowing liberally for expenses, the purchase money, invested at 5 per cent., would produce £9,000 per annum." Elsewhere they say, "There were many landowners who were receiving a net rental of not more than one per cent. on the capital value of their estates."

It is the custom of landowners to speak of their "income" or their "net rental" from estates. If the land, no matter how valuable, is not used it does not, of course, bring in any revenue, although its value may be a high one intrinsically. Under-used land may be bringing in a mere fraction of its economic rent. Thousands of acres of so-called "building land" surrounding centres of population have a high value, and the owners pay little towards the rates, but it is land held up against the pressure of population, and a high ransom must be paid to secure its liberation. "Income" or "net rental"

*This total probably includes certain buildings and other improvements.

in any case is the revenue when all expenses, including income and other taxes and tithes, have been deducted.

Again quoting from the brochure, we read: "The burden of taxation is crushing." Lord Clinton, in a letter to the Press some time ago, cited the figures for 1920 of ten typical agricultural estates, with a total area of 16,768 acres, and a gross rent roll of £20,381. Tithes, land tax, repairs, management, insurance and other compulsory charges amounted to £11,985, leaving a balance of £8,396. The income tax and super-tax on this came to £5,652 (less certain abatements), equivalent to an average of no less than 13s. 5d. in the pound." Here we have, as the result of raising tribute, by means of a parasitic rate and tax system, discouraged food production and buildings, and yet the landowner only obtains a miserable "income" of £2,744 net, part of which is interest on buildings and other improvements.

But in sympathising with the landowner, who in any case receives more condolence in his afflictions than most people, we should remember that the selling value of his estate may be high.

It is social prestige and natural sentimental reasons which frequently prevent him taking advantage of the market, or possibly the fact that if he waits a little longer he may obtain a higher price than at the moment. It is the future of agriculture itself that should command our attention more than the future of landlordism.

Landed property realises a high price because, for various reasons, it is worth a high price in the market. Land with an agricultural value of £30 per acre suddenly possesses a value of £300, £500, £1,000 per acre or more when it is required for building houses. The fact that before land can be obtained at all for the purpose of growing food, building houses and factories, making roads, winning coal and other minerals, securing wayleaves for railways, telegraphs, telephones, power supply cables and the thousand and one activities of life, a great ransom must be paid by industry, is a serious matter for all those who obtain their living by working whether they are in administrative, executive, or merely in humble positions. It is a terrible barrier for those who are unemployed, whose competition for jobs brings the wages and salaries of those

employed below the economic level, and we shall never escape from the vicious circle of niggardly production and unfair exchange so long as the existing land-tenure system continues.

Speculators who made money during the war are purchasing landed estates at fancy prices. They spend their money in this way hoping to "found" a family, with a similar feeling that the ancient Egyptians had when they expended wealth for the provision of magnificent tombs to ensure happiness in their after-life. At the high prices paid for the land the return is small, and the tenants are rack-rented to make landlordism pay. Many things may be tried by the new owner. He loses money tilling arable land, and therefore puts it down to pasture and raises stock. He finds that his tenants cannot pay higher rents even when their labourers' wages are cut to vanishing point and he turns the farms into sporting coverts. Discovering that in doing so he obtains relief from the rates, the whole estate soon becomes a pleasure ground, and the landowner views with satisfaction the shortage of houses in the overcrowded manufacturing town on the edge of his estate. By selling quite a small portion of his domain to the County Council, to the speculative builder and others for housing and arterial road schemes, the landowner discovers that he obtains more than enough plunder to reimburse him for his original outlay.

Considering the intense progress of landlordism in Great Britain and considering that rates and taxes on agriculture are about three times what they are on the Continent where large estates are frequently discouraged, it is no wonder that the British husbandman cannot compete with the foreign producer in the price of his product.

Against the grower in the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands,* where there are better land laws and where taxes are still lower, he is helpless. The result is that a despairing peasantry forsakes the countryside. A few may emigrate abroad, often falling from the frying-pan into the fire, and many join their friends in the overcrowded manufacturing cities and towns to swell the C3 population. Before the war 8.8 per cent. of the population of Great

* When the British Government recently invited the Channel Islanders to increase their taxation several times over, the proposal was received with hilarity!

Britain depended for their livelihood on the growing of food and stock raising, compared with the following proportions in other countries: Belgium 21.9, Germany 34.6, France 42.4, Italy 58.8, Greece 44.6, Russia 55.6, Serbia 64.7, Bulgaria 82.4.*

Since the war there is no reason for supposing that these proportions have varied to any extent. Is it not time that we settled our own country? Here at home there are opportunities for the agriculturists who have sought refuge in the towns. In developing our own natural resources the pressure of population can be taken away from the dense centres of Britain. The key industries of food, clothing and housing, which are the activities of peace, are being suffocated because Britain does not know how to live. The unemployed cannot be absorbed in industry because everywhere industry is severely discouraged by taxes and because ordinary citizens do not possess a stake in the country.

It is said that the recognition of personal property is the first step from barbarism to civilisation. When we survey the inroads that have been made by modern governments upon the rights of individuals as regards personal property it is easy to see why civilisation is declining. Only a free country can support its population.

It is accounted good to reduce the rates upon the use of land for agriculture. Why not abolish the barbarous rates altogether upon the use of land for houses, shops, factories, and improvements generally in cities, towns, and villages?

But this step on the way to civilisation cannot be taken unless we recover sight of what belongs to the community as a whole. Let the ground rents of the public domain be collected so that proportionate allocations may be made by the Treasury to the local authorities, and it will not then be necessary to treat industry as though it were a criminal offence. Britain cannot live so long as the very source of wealth itself is withheld for private gain, and landholders are allowed to live rent free, tending to make our country derelict. It is an old maxim that low rents are not conducive to full production. Neglect to put land to its best use should be no excuse for rent evasion.

*Figures supplied by Sir R. Sanders in the House of Commons, February 19th, 1923.

THEATRE-CRAFT
Editors: Hermon Ould and Horace Shipp

Nationalism and the Drama

By Hermon Ould

It is a matter of common knowledge that during the Great War the German theatre ministered to the national morale by maintaining the high standard which peace conditions had developed. Articles which have appeared in Theatre-Craft and elsewhere have shown how jealously the State cherished its native classics and "*unser* Shakespeare" and refused to offer poorer or lighter fare to a war-sick people. Much the same phenomenon is to be observed in Germany now, when national feeling is probably almost as vividly stressed as it was in war-time. The national and municipal theatres all over the country are concentrating their attention upon German classics—and, of course, upon Shakespeare. I have in front of me as I write the time-table of the three State theatres in Munich, giving the arrangements for one week. Ten different operas are down for performance. Apart from Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor* and Puccini's *Bohème*, they are all German—Strauss, Wagner, Weber. At the Residenz Theater during the same period plays by Lessing, Bjornson, Calderon, Grabbe and Goldoni were to be given, as well as a couple of modern works. At the Prinz Regenten Theater—Schiller, Shakespeare, Hebbel, Lessing and—*Old Heidelberg!* This is not the programme for a picked week. It is for the week when I chanced to be in Munich, and is typical.

There is more than one reason for this fidelity to the classics. One is that they offend no one. Many of the most interesting modern plays are tendencious and cannot be performed in a State theatre at a time when everything which the State does is subjected to microscopic scrutiny. For instance, performances of Ernst Toller's *Masse Mensch* and *Maschinenstürmer*, which express

unblushingly a communist-pacifist philosophy, would come ill from a State theatre in that same Bavaria where Toller still lies in prison for his part in the revolution! Fritz von Unruh, by many regarded as the most important of the younger German dramatists, is unlikely to get a showing in the Bavarian State theatres, for no other reason than that some of his plays are anti-Catholic in feeling and Bavaria is a Catholic country.

Another reason against the production of modern plays is the cost. The theatres lead a hand-to-mouth existence; the officials are ill-paid; the actors can scarcely subsist on their salaries. Only enthusiasm for their work could retain the services of most of those who are employed by the State theatres. A modern play involves several additional items of expenditure. The author has to be paid, new sets have to be provided and actors' parts typed—this last a quite serious item. But more cogent than any of these reasons is undoubtedly the opinion—possibly instinctive but more probably very conscious—that at a time of national strain the function of the theatre is to strengthen the stamina of the people by presenting plays which strike an heroic note. Needless to say, the plays which serve this purpose best are those which have a nationalist tendency, and it seems to matter little if the circumstances of the play bear no relation to the circumstances of the political situation. Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, for instance, which has little or nothing in sympathy with modern German nationalism, has come in these latter days to be regarded as an expression of the national spirit. More legitimately, the Nibelungen Saga is springing up on all sides. Wagner's Ring cycle is, of course, the daily bread of German opera; but other versions of the legend can now be enjoyed in various forms. At the Circus Busch in Berlin the legends have been used as a basis for a spectacular pantomime; a film with the same theme is at present in course of preparation, and some of the best German actors are taking the leading *rôles*. More important than these is the revival, at the Prinz Regenten Theater in Munich, of two parts of Hebbel's tragedy, *Die Nibelungen*.

In England we know little of Hebbel. We have had no devoted translator able and willing to do for German

classics what Schlegel did for Shakespeare. I am told by men of sound judgment that Hebbel's *Judith* and *Maria Magdalena* are of first-rate importance, and if adequately translated would be certain of an appreciative reception in England; but I cannot believe that *Die Nibelungen* would ever find an enthusiastic English audience. Even in Germany it has suffered neglect. It was first produced at the Court Theatre in Weimar on the last day of 1861, apparently with extraordinary success. It was later given in Vienna and in many German centres, and in 1883 came to Munich for the last time till now, after forty years, it has been revived under the direction of Dr. Karl Zeiss, and again with considerable success. The production is in many ways excellent. Everything for the eye is well thought out, and Leo Pasetti, a young Russian who designed the setting and the costumes, may be congratulated upon the economy of means which he employed to produce scenes which were often very beautiful. Although a Russian and young, Mr. Pasetti seems to have little sympathy with the extremist methods of some of his compatriots. In *Die Nibelungen*, as in *Minna von Barnhelm*, for which he also provided the settings, restraint is exercised almost to the point of over-refinement: one is never surprised. But as one is never displeased and often delighted, the absence of thrill may be overlooked. The ear is more harshly treated. Perhaps the consciousness that they were playing the part of supermen, heroes of age-long legends, induced the actors to pitch their voices higher and more voluminously than is usual, even on the German stage, where over-loudness is normally much more common than with us. The effect was sometimes almost comic, the quarrel between Brunhild and Kriemhild taking on the character of an altercation between two ladies of Whitechapel. Nevertheless, it was from Brunhild, played by Annemarie Holtz, that one got the best performance of the evening. It was a performance often dignified and impressive and never lacking in terrific conviction.

Of the play itself I speak with diffidence born of the consciousness of a very imperfect understanding of the language. I received the impression that the work was one of considerable literary beauty and no little dramatic force, but I cannot think that this rehash of ancient legends,

containing so little that is universal in its application, has much to say to us to-day; and if there is any servant of culture who is contemplating the translation of German classical drama, I should not advise him to start with this work. More worth his while would be Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm*. It is one of the few examples of German comedy which seem of enduring quality. Not a play of vital interest, it is nevertheless well worth producing for its neat characterisation and pithy phrasing. Played in quick *tempo* and with a sense of the period, it makes an enjoyable evening's entertainment. The success of the Munich production was the Franciska of Miss Kaete Bierkowski, whose verve and excellent vivacity make one wish to see her Beatrice and Viola.

I suppose it will be time enough to ask why we neglect foreign classics when the question, " Why do we neglect our own? " has been answered. Germany, at least, is not neglecting *our* classics. I hear that one of the best-known producers is contemplating productions of *The Cenci* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, while in Munich Swinburne's tragedy, *Chastelard*, is to be produced for the first time on any stage.

Men, Machines and Marionettes

By Horace Shipp

At no time since pre-war days has the stage in London been so seriously concerned with the art for which it is assumed to exist. There is almost an epidemic of intelligence amongst managements, and one is no longer driven to include stage-stuff of the æsthetic level of *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife* among the first half-dozen pieces of importance, as Mr. Grossmith did last autumn when defending the stage from my highbrowism. It may be taken as symbolic that Mr. Grossmith himself is appearing at His Majesty's in so serious a part as the *title-rôle* of *The Gay Lord Quex*, which stands among the interesting revivals. Among these also, at the Duke of York's Theatre Marie Tempest has abandoned the neither good nor gracious *Annabelle* of the exclamations for *The Marriage of Kitty*; Gladys Cooper makes a further bid for place outside light comedy in her presentation of *Magda*, and incidentally provides Franklin Dyall with a part worthy his powers; the Old Vic, having introduced to us Laurence Binyon's *Arthur*, continue their Shakespeare with *Twelfth Night*, and now with *Hamlet*; the Everyman, the home of Shaw, gives us *The Doctor's Dilemma*; rival *Pollys* draw large audiences to the Savoy, Chelsea, and the Law Courts; and the Lyric and Regent's successes continue to succeed.

To this body of serious old work must be added the coming of Eugene O'Neill's *Anna Christie*—the commencement of the O'Neill cycle, for which we are indebted to Mr. Cochran following Norman Macdermott's lead. C. K. Munro's comedy, *At Mrs. Beam's*; the Kreisler play which challenged pseudo-orientalism at Drury Lane; the arrival and vogue of the Marionette Theatre at the Scala; and the immediately forthcoming production of both the Capek plays at the Regent and the St. Martin's, add to a list of which we may be reasonably proud. Interesting in its catholicity, it tends to prove a strain on critical judg-

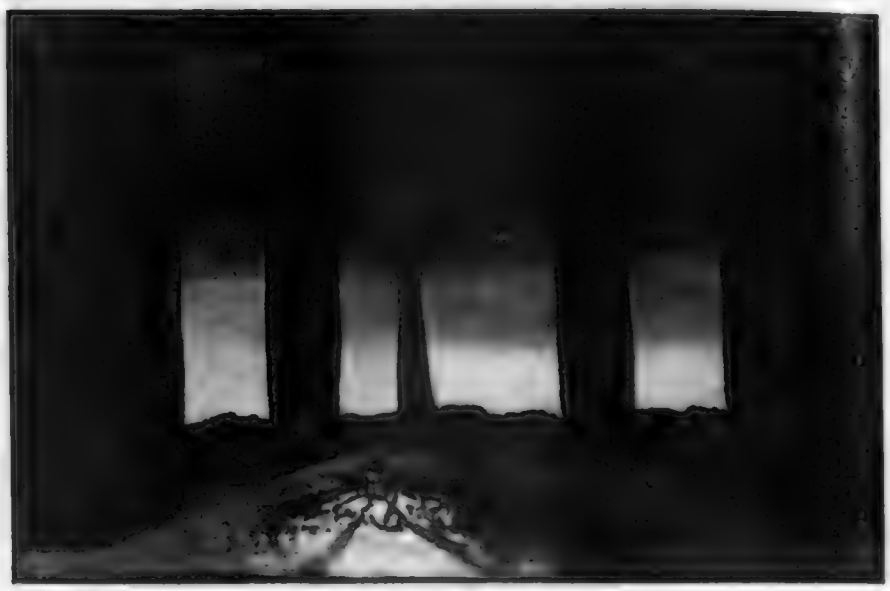
Design by Svend Gade for The Church Scene in Kapellmeister Kreisler.

(Königgrätzerstrasse Theatre, Berlin).

The Church Scene in Angelo.
(Drury Lane Theatre, London).

A bold cross, down stage, completed this setting.

Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 2.
A room of state in the castle.
Designed by Robert Atkins.
Executed by Hubert Hine.
(Old Vic., London).



Graveyard Scene in Hamlet.
Designed by Robert Atkins.
Executed by Hubert Hine.
(Old Vic., London).

ment, almost to classify the dramatic critics into enthusiasts for realism or theatricalism, for play construction or stage-craft, or for that art of the theatre which transcends its departments. In truth, unless one is to view the theatre from the altitude of that all-comprehensive art, it is almost impossible to get into correct focus the many elements which this list of plays reveals. At what point does the enthusiasm born of boredom, which makes *At Mrs. Beam's* a good play, touch the pre-Raphaelite romanticism of *Arthur*, or the deep humanism of *Anna Christie* find common measure with the *Teatro dei Piccoli* or with *Angelo*? Yet within the scope of the theatre there is room and place for all these, and for any other type which, true to itself as a work of art, fits into the theatre's great function of stimulating and holding an audience by the presentation of dramatic truth or beauty.

The experiment with *Angelo* proved an interesting test case. My own impression of the play was first gained in Berlin last Autumn and recorded in a tiny note in these columns in October. It is certainly not a great play, but it is a play written around an interesting idea and, in many ways, skilfully worked out. It comes near to breaking down the walls between the objective and the subjective in its telling of the story of the triple coming of his incarnate inspiration to the impetuous music-master. An intricate stage-machine presents this story in the manner with which we are now perfectly familiar at the kinema theatre, showing now the master himself telling his confidante, now the story in progress, now the mentality of the composer portrayed by dream picture or symbol. At which something new there went up a great cry, and this departure from good, straightforward first-act-the-drawing-room-second-act-the-library-third-act-the-same modern comedy was hailed as utterly incomprehensible. Without claiming more than the normal amount of intelligence, I will assert that I followed it in a language in which I can do little more than order a meal, and since the Drury Lane management thoughtfully gave a careful synopsis on the programme it should not be difficult even for a dramatic critic to follow the play. But a horrible doubt (and much confusion) seemed to exist as to whether it was or was not Expressionism.

My personal quarrel with the production at Drury Lane is that it was not Expressionism. It was disjointed naturalism. Only at rare moments did we escape from a picture-frame stage, large or small, but full of detail. The opening scene—the Illuminati Club—was excellent. The characters were grouped around a table isolated by three beams of light sweeping down from immediately above. All the rest of the great stage was in darkness, from which and into which the actors came and went. The last scene of the second act—the stage door of the theatre—was equally successful in its elimination of unessentials and its use of darkness as a frame. Throughout there was some fine stage chiaroscura and a frankly theatrical use of lighting which at times gave real beauty. Then the old Adam in Mr. Arthur Collins would delve among the stock sets of his theatre and fill the stage with realistic cardboard trees, or old oak furniture and settees, and pictures on the wall. His dream-church would have done credit to an architect, and yet in the Königgrätzerstrasse one got more æsthetic satisfaction from a few Gothic shapes and a giant cross snared in a tangle of light and shadow.

Certainly, too, the temptation to make full use of the wonderful machine for projecting stages invented by Svend Gade caused the designers of this play to over-use it. If it were only used when its mechanism actually presented a necessary phase of the story, it would help more by hindering less, and it would give more opportunity for acting and dialogue, which tend to be overshadowed by this abundant mechanism. It is, anyway, an interesting piece of theatre work, full of possibilities for the producer and the dramatist of the future, and the fact that it demands of one's mentality a somewhat quicker reaction time than the carefully unfolded dramatic histories of Lady Somebody's pearls is not a valid argument against its acceptance in the theatre.

Now, lest we be accused of disloyalty to the drama of flesh and blood, we pay due tribute to C. K. Munro's play of boarding-house life and types. Flesh and blood it is, with that little more human than humanity which makes of it drama. The play stands on its characterisation of the flotsam and jetsam of humanity thrown up into a Notting Hill boarding house. One has the feeling that Mr. Munro will use his insight into character and affairs, his power over

types, eventually to produce a big play; but at present something of the appalling wastefulness of his method in *The Rumour* creeps into this more closely-knit work, and one would commend to the author the scriptural injunction against the use of vain repetition. My chief dissatisfaction with the play—and I came away with that nameless hunger for fair play sacred to Mark Sabre and his like—came from something deeper than Mr. Munro's errors of technique. One felt guilty of laughter, and I submit to the author and his well-fed, well-clothed, and socially-contented audience that Miss Shoe and Mr. Durrows and Miss Cheezle, at whom they made their mirth, are more than a little tragic. If only that fact had come through for a few moments, if only the laughter were not quite so pitiless—well, Mr. Munro would not have written *that* play. It is only when we are very young that we laugh at the people with humped backs and broken lives. A fact of equal importance dramatically is that you cannot make art from what you despise. A satirist must have an ideal: that is what gives his satire its power. The acting of this play provides three or four excellent performances, although Dennis Eadie as the crook was terribly disappointing. Jean Cadell in a part which inevitably threw our minds back to her playing in O'Neill's *Diff'rent* made me wonder what O'Neill, with his profounder humanism, would have made of that set of people.

In our enthusiasm for this renaissance of worthy theatrical work in the West End, it were well not to forget that the Old Vic carries on the work which has often saved the dignity of the London theatre through the dark days. As I write they are playing an almost complete *Hamlet*, with an absolutely complete version on April 21st as a birthday tribute. Ernest Milton is back on their familiar boards in the *title-rôle*.

Also we are indebted to them for the introduction of Laurence Binyon's *Arthur*. The play was fully of their genre—a dignified verse drama, acted, spoken, and staged with that clarity which is determined to place nothing between the audience and the author's meaning. If one has criticism to offer it is of this very clarity, which tends to lack atmosphere occasionally, and in its recognition of the beginnings and endings of every word to render blank

verse as spondee. But the play was beautiful and sincere within the self-imposed artistry of its romantic tradition; and it is a joy to hear a poet's English in the theatre.

Perhaps this *résumé* of some of the month's theatre work is proving my leaning away from the realistic and naturalistic, for I find my enthusiasm rising at the contemplation of the visit to the Scala Theatre of the famous Marionette Players from Rome. One is not going to hail them as being of the æsthetic standing of the Russian Ballet, nor exhaust superlatives; but a thoroughly jolly show they certainly are. It remains to be seen what they will do in less fanciful work than this first opera and variety entertainment. I feel they are worth a little more attention as to costume and *décor* (it was these things, as well as the perfection of their technique in movement, which made the Russian Ballet pure art), and I want the marionettery (if I may coin a word) to be given full play. It interests us for a little to see a puppet which imitates life, but that interest will pall. Behind it lies the enthusiasm for the puppet with a life and characteristic of its own, doing things which no human does. That is why we loved Bil-Bal-Bul in those ecstatic moments when his little brown body achieved the impossible so thoroughly, and why we loved the cat, and the spiders, the spindles, the public mourners, and the prim fairies. They are inhabitants of puppetry, making no compromise with our mundane world. Perhaps it were a wise choice to give a fairy opera as an introduction to these charming Italian visitors, for their quaint quality fits them perfectly for rendering fairy-lore, as all the tinsel wings on full-size humans will never do. Their gestures, being limited, become fully significant. Their claim as art depends upon their power of elimination so that every movement tells. Perhaps they lived before Aristotle invented imitation as a basis of art.

I wish that a lot of people had done so.

"Anna Christie"

By S. O.

One had heard from travellers that America had a real dramatist who actually got it across, but because his name was O'Neill, another Irishman, I must confess that I hardly believed it until the other evening I saw Eugene O'Neill's play, *Anna Christie* (at the Strand), played by its American interpreters, having been led thither by the controversy of our critics, some of whom neglected the play to glorify the players, while others damned the players to praise the play. Clearly something unusual. And there is. The Strand has a real, live drama. An all-round performance. Yes, let us be emphatic: *Anna Christie* is the best play in London.

Only three characters, but they are admirably characteristic, sharply differentiated, each a complete whole filling a part as clear and vital as the people of Ibsen. They are an old Swedish bos'n, his daughter, and an Irish stoker and another. The charm of the thing lies in this real chunk of heterogeneous America as seen and re-created by an Irishman who has a natural dramatic sense. Each character is necessary and complete. There are no frills, no concessions, no sentimentalities. The play is Art. The players are artists. Pauline Lord and the old Swedish sailor are genuine "creations." The theatre was packed. I think I enjoyed *Anna Christie* almost as much as *The Playboy*.

The drama is symbolic. Nothing, that is, happens theatrically; and though the tragedy is real and the scene of it haunting, like Greek drama, the natural comedy of life plays it away, as it were, dissolves it into charming facets of fun and triviality, and neither predominates. That is a great feat. The balance of the play is remarkable, and to the end one hardly knows whether to regard it as delightful comedy or aching tragedy.

It is a woman's play and dependant upon the interpretation. Pauline Lord is a discovery. Her methods are

entirely different from our theatrical methods and she has a voice—that cracked feminine note that stirs like a fiddle string—which, for the part, is a gift. Never once does she over-act, over-emphasise, or seek to control the picture. She is entirely lovable, and so the Irish stoker thinks, to the horror of the girl's father, whose *bête noire* is the sea, that " Old Devil."

On this theme of the sea the drama is built. The stoker is all right, but the sea is the Devil, and the old man knows its mysteries and resolves that his girl shall not marry a sailor. But she comes of the sailor stock. Put away by her father, inland, as a child, she grew up as a " slavey," and at last rebelled to secure freedom in gaiety. As the play opens, she returns to her father after fifteen years' absence for a rest. The sea recaptures her. On the old coal barge she is happy. Enter the Irish stoker, shipwrecked. The rest is the play. A beautiful end rounds off this little epic of the sea in harmony, and here the Irishman gets his chance. The sea wins. The " Old Devil " knows. There is no better ensemble acting to be seen in London and the play has genius. We shall want to see more of O'Neill. He is clearly the successor of Synge, but more restrained, less of the poet, more truly the dramatist, an Ibsenic Irishman. There is not a false note. It is a play of types and sex, a comedy of a corner of life etched in with the vision and sympathy of an artist who has something to say and knows how to say it.

America has now the champion fighter and—a dramatist, and this little gem of pathos and its interpretation should help to confound the " wowsers " of theatreland, who regard the stage as a speculation and the public as a fool. *Anna Christie* provides an evening to be done again.

THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

"Angela"

By Major P. S. Long-Innes

"You love me," I said, "I know that you love me."

She gazed at me with her great brown eyes, but said nothing at all.

"You love me," I repeated, "you adore me, you worship the ground I tread on . . . now, don't you?"

She answered never a word, but gazed straight into my eyes, with a candid and happy look. Never a trace of shame in her face, nothing but utter trust and adoration. And yet I had to tell her; and I became brutal in my outspokenness, thinking I might shame her into some expression of what she must be feeling, and so give me an opening to say what I had to say.

"Ever since the first moment we met, you have loved me, worshipped me, fawned on me like a dog, obeyed my merest word, considered by slightest wish your inexorable law . . . and, to crown all, have lived in my house, slept under my roof . . . and yet, all this time you have never *said* that you loved me, never *told* me what I am to you. And still you can't deny all I've said . . . now can you, can you? *Tell* me you love me," I said. "Tell me," I repeated, "tell me."

Still she answered never a word, but sat in her great armchair on the other side of the hearth . . . and her eyes never left mine.

I was vexed, irritated, and I determined to rouse her.

"Well, perhaps I am wrong, and you don't love me as I thought."

Her eyes dropped, and she looked quietly, almost sleepily—as if I bored her—at the fire.

This was worse than her former steady, candid gaze.

" Just as well, perhaps," I said. " For then there will be less unpleasantness over what I have to tell you. I meant to break matters a little more gently, but since you don't care any longer . . . for you don't, do you? "—she looked across at me again, but still said never a word; and I knew that I lied, that I wronged her in thinking that her love had ever faltered or weakened. But I had to say what there was to say . . . to tell her the Great News. " Since you don't care any longer, I can say what I have to say with an easier mind. To-night I am going out, leaving you to dine alone. I dine at the house of a friend, and this evening will be the happiest of my life, because "—I paused for a moment to let my words have their full effect . . . there must be no lack of understanding on her part—" because this very afternoon the daughter of my friend told me she would be my wife!"

She sprang from her chair, as at that moment a knock sounded at the door, and my servant walked in.

" It's time you were dressing, sir," he said.

" Yes," I answered. " I'm just coming. And, Travis, take Angela out and give her her dinner . . . she doesn't seem to take the faintest interest in my Great News."

And Angela trotted out, wagging the stump she calls her tail.

Youth and Marriage*

By Vero W. Garratt

THERE has been a good deal said and written of late on the subject of marriage. The Press, in fact, has been besieged by a heterogeneous group of writers who probably imagined they were the prophets of Modern Nineveh. From the elderly episcopal bachelor to the thrice-divorced revue actress, there has flowed a volume of opinion purporting to show that marriage is falling from its former grace and that social morality is on the decline.

And it was all due to youth. Young men were ill-mannered, undisciplined, and rebellious in spirit. Young women were flippant and vulgar and given over to unblushing immodesty. What was needed was more parental control, more education on sexual matters, more direction in courtship, and many other " mores " of this character.

What has not been advocated is more opportunity for youth to express himself on the question. Of every ten articles written on the subject nine have come from people who would be just as happy discussing wireless telegraphy were they called upon to do so, while the other one may be granted as a special favour to the President of the Oxford Union, or to someone partly representative of the great mass of youth that is expected to remain inarticulately quiescent.

There are so many people anxious to do all the thinking for youth that if this article manages to break the " vicious circle " something of a national service will have been performed.

Let it be granted at once that a high standard of social morality is the true measure of a nation's strength. Material prosperity is merely an easy access to decay unless it is controlled by sufficient moral stamina and relegated to

* The term " Youth " is not used in any narrow sense. It includes men and women up to the age of say thirty or more, who are still unmarried.

its proper position in life. An increasing repudiation of a moral code that hitherto has expressed the conscience of a nation implies a movement towards new standards either for good or for ill.

The charge that has been made against youth is substantially correct. He is in revolt against conventional morality. Young men and women are sex-conscious, not on the old lines of retiring modesty, but rather in the opposite direction of intimacy.

" How delightfully immoral," was the remark of a girl student when shown a certain periodical by a male chum. And neither of them were shocked. Indeed, the new Bohemianism is of such a nature that the proverbial maiden's blush is regarded as an anachronism.

The girl or fellow who goes about now in a strait-jacket of inflexible ethics must be subject to a good deal of friendly boycott.

But this admission of revolt does not carry the implication that it is totally unjustified. It is stated because it is relevant to whatever may be said hereafter regarding youth and marriage, and also because it includes the plea of " guilty " at the outset.

When public preceptors sit in judgment on the vices of youth it is their business to find out and state the real causes of moral aberration, instead of suggesting that virtue will be enthroned by a mere reiteration of a precept or platitude. Without sympathy and understanding the efforts of the critics are simply futile.

Now the institution of marriage, viewed merely as a social system, is to avoid promiscuity. Historically it marks the development of civilisation through periods when woman was the prey of man and sex-relationship was little better regulated than that of the animals. It carries reciprocal obligations. The individual on the one hand undertakes to respect the lawful function of sex, while on the other hand the State provides legal protection in support of the marriage contract.

But the chief implication of this is that every legitimate person of the community has the right to marry at a reasonable age, and that if that right is nullified by unnatural restrictions, then society fails to carry out its obligations to the individual.

The ethical importance of marriage consists in the general good deriving from the observance of social laws controlling the function of sex. Higher still is the Christian ideal of marriage, which lifts it into the supernatural state and invests it with a definitely divine authority.

It will be gathered from this that marriage as a social system can only be effective in producing a high standard of morality in proportion as individual people are free to adopt it. This is not to imply that it is impossible for people to live continently, or that marriage is a legalised system of prostitution, but that since every normal person has a natural right to self-expression in the sex function, and that right is voluntarily subordinated to social claims, the system defeats itself if people are artificially prevented from entering into wedlock.

Let us examine the position of the youth of to-day.

In the first place, the war has left him with a kind of sexual neurosis. Apart from the strain on his nervous system, the abnormal conditions of the past few years produced an abnormal sense of maturity. His participation in organised means of destruction kept his world intensely physical. Morality was at a discount. Vast armies of youthful men were taken from the restraining influence of home life and sent to conditions that tested every fibre of their manhood. On every battle front the inducements to sexual vice almost defied resistance. Had moralists been a little more active in those times, our young armies might have been better equipped in wisdom and knowledge before they encountered those plague-dens of pollution that brought so many men to ruin.

There is no doubt that the majority of men who went abroad were lured into a sexual compromise that set them on the way towards the cultivation of vicious habits.

But a more formidable incentive to the lowering of the marriage ideal is provided by the economic hardship which renders marriage practically impossible. Yet this is the aspect that is consistently ignored by the critics. Nothing is more easy than for elderly writers who glided into marriage with the utmost ease, and are blessed with every social convenience for the proper observance of their bond, to dogmatise on the sanctity of marriage and to offer aphoristic antidotes for moral ills.

The urgent need is to remove some of the economic restrictions which forbid people to marry at an age when union is most desirable.

Thousands of the men who came back from the war are virtual bankrupts. Whatever distribution of sacrifice affected some people, there is no doubt that the young men who sacrificed capital and career are bearing the heaviest portion of the burden. Anyone who is familiar with clubs and colleges and places where ex-Service men gather in considerable numbers, cannot help being impressed by the economic blight resting on the remaining flower of our manhood.

Marriage is treated at the best as a remote possibility provided that a miraculous leap in salaries sanctions the buying of a home and the belief that one has sufficient economic security to sustain it. To urge that love should not be bound by material considerations may suit the reflections of those who live in a world of romance, but happily for the unborn generation the young men of to-day are very much realists. They look with the eyes of disillusion. They understand the consequences of marrying on a precarious income and without the requisite minimum of social security. And hence the majority of young men are growing cynical and contemptuous of marriage just at the age when it should be most attractive and benefiting to themselves and the community in general.

The importance of emphasising this economic inhibition on marriage will readily be recognised when we come to consider the effects it has on public morals and the conventional esteem in which the system of marriage is held.

If the efficacy of the system depends on the antecedent condition that no one will be artificially debarred from entering into wedlock, then one can understand why the system is so largely considered inefficacious. It means that in proportion as the marriage ideal is subordinated to economic considerations, in proportion does its ethical appeal forfeit validity with regard to sexual morality.

There is no virtue in men being condemned to a life of celibacy in deference to a system that has ceased to function so far as they are concerned. If they have observed the laws of chastity on the presupposition that when they arrived at a reasonable age for marrying no social

hindrance would stand in the way, are they to pay homage to that hindrance by continuing to recognise a code of morality that has failed them? The truth is that under a circumstance of this kind it is difficult to determine illicit intercourse.

Much of the laxity in sexual morality is the direct outcome of this position. There may not be any well-defined ethics governing the revolt, but nevertheless men instinctively realise that as this economic blockade against marriage is purely artificial, they are being denied the natural and social right of union through no fault of their own.

But this anomaly affects young women with greater force than it does the men. Their upbringing and inadequate education have tended to compress their life and outlook into the one ambition of marrying and realising the joys of motherhood.

The comparatively few number of women who would deny this statement cannot be held to answer for the silent yearnings of the great mass of unfulfilled womanhood.

Not the least outstanding tragedy of the war was the enormous disparity created between the numbers of the sexes. This gave rise to an unhealthy competition among women to attract men on bolder lines than were normally adopted, for the average girl has a dark dread of being "left on the shelf." But what must her feelings be when she finds that in addition a big section of the men who have survived the war are matrimonially disinherited through an economic prohibition?

The new free-and-easy sex-companionship is born of the mutual recognition of this social grievance. Where it is possible for men and women to come together and form friendships they do so, without any regard for the committal convention that marriage must be the object in view. Indeed, both sexes as a rule are too well aware of the barrier set up between them to have any illusions as to the character of such friendship. When governed properly it is a good sort of Bohemianism, and is best illustrated, perhaps, in the now common practice of having a dancing partner.

When it is unregulated it ends in vice. "We shall never marry, so why not enjoy ourselves while we can?" is the prevailing philosophy of those who have ceased to

regard the sexual act as immoral. They consciously remain outside the pale of conventional morality and would contend that it is the social system that is immoral for forcing them there. It can also be asserted with confidence that there is a strong impulse among many of these people to ignore the legality of marriage by living together as man and wife on the grounds that the woman can thereby retain her economic freedom instead of being perpetually tied to the misfortunes resulting from the economic restrictions on the man.

The fact, however, that has to be faced is that youth has not ceased to serve marriage, but that society has ceased to serve youth.

Another social hindrance to the encouragement of proper and timely marriages is the lack of suitable places for the promotion of healthy companionship. There would be no use for half our divorce courts if young people had earlier opportunities of finding out their affinities under conditions less fortuitous than those provided by the streets. But here again convention blocks the way towards the adoption of a general broadminded outlook on this matter.

Our great towns stand as dismal testimonies to sex-insularity from the truly social point of view. Men and women grow up with appalling ignorance of life and character, with the result that courtship often becomes a superficial experience of mutual admiration and married love a disastrous form of self-deception.

Many of these disasters could be averted if sex-companionship were socialised instead of ostracised. It is time the churches, Y.M.C.A.'s, and similar bodies scrapped some of their antiquated ideas and realised that by cultivating a broader and healthier companionship of the sexes they would be doing more in the interests of social morality than by all their preaching. The strange thing about the Church is that while it is apprehensive of the possible consequences of permitting greater liberty in its social life, it can apparently treat with a pleasant disregard the actual consequences of young people being forced to seek companionship in all kinds of risky places.

If these institutions took the lead it would not be long before the formation of Municipal Social Clubs came to satisfy a wider public demand. These clubs, under wise

and tolerant management, could be made to pay their way and to foster the social life of members by the aid of sub-sections that catered for all tastes and talents which make for the true expression of personality.

By this freer intermingling of the sexes the law of natural selection would have a better chance to operate than it does under our present absurd conventions. Men and women would meet each other not under the spell of some irrational infatuation, but with a due appreciation of people as they really are. It is not the romance of the sentimentalist that sanctifies married life, but the proper mating of temperament and those natural dispositions that make up the reality of normal existence.

The new attitude of youth, then, towards marriage is determined mainly by the peculiar period through which he is passing. He is harassed on all sides by social and economic restrictions, with the result that the ethical ideal of marriage becomes virtually subordinated to the immoralities of a defective social system.

What the remedy is for the social system does not concern us here. It is sufficient to state the bare facts that youth cannot avail himself of the marriage system and that the problem is mainly economic. This in turn throws out direct incitements to vice and brings about a corresponding decline in social morality.

The ethical appeal alone is insufficient in dealing with the problem. As the obstacles to marriage are artificial, youth requires their removal before any aspersions can be made on his moral conduct. In addition, he sees the need for cultivating sex-companionship on sound rational lines and for safeguarding marriage from the fortuitous risks of superficial emotionalism.

Until practical sympathy helps to restore youth to the position in which marriage becomes an attractive blessing to his life, the moral ideals that govern matrimonial union are bound to decline in worth.

Runes of Mystery

By Austin Harrison

THE Dunkirk oration of M. Poincaré has dissipated the slender hopes, or rather expectations, raised in Fleet Street of returning reason, and even the expensive optimist, which in these times it is the correct thing to be, has no answer. Quite naturally. There is no answer. In the Ruhr "we are," cries out the lawyer leader of France, and there we remain until the last penny due has been paid. So ends the Loucheur myth. He stood on the Dunkirk platform and beamed compliance. A shudder passes across Europe. The bayonet glints. Long live the bayonet! Dr. Rosenberg in the Reichstag responds listlessly, hopelessly, helplessly. At Paris the Germans offered £1,500,000,000; now that figure diminishes. Bankers look glumly at one another for a moment. The great British Press is wrapped in silence. Nothing to say, same as the Government whose head is already decapitated by the informed. A world looks on—and sinks. But something grows sprucely all the time, while the elected majorities of People's Parliaments beat the air with wails and faction; and so the last Budget gives us a 1d. off beer and 6d. off the income tax. Paris is almost as astonished at our economics as we are at hers. We tax ourselves. The French live on money "recoverable" from Germany. Meanwhile the German currency issue exceeds 5,000,000,000,000. It is spring, nearly five years after war. Peace is illusionary. In gay, irresponsible fashion, the politicals of European democracies continue the dance.

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In the wonderful month of May one involuntarily expects things and, in truth, the unexpected is happening. Once more our hope is the Celt. Our evacuation policy in Ireland has at last borne fruit. The Irish, growing tired of internecine feud, are throwing down Mr. De Valera's spears for the calmer mysteries of peace and order, and

it looks as if Mr. Cosgrave, the publican, may yet win through where the great Crusaders in the cause of Irish freedom, both Irish and English, failed individually and collectively. This is at least constructive, a thought of vernal radiance. Ireland is returning to her senses. The murder policy is shot up. Hate as statesmanship has lost its luxury. Shortly, it may be, only the imprecations of the "black woman" will remain to strangle the recovering harmony. A poor thing, Ireland is still her own, and, left to herself to regain the attachments of life and the colour of her imaginative continuity, there can be little doubt but that, despite all the snakes and curses in the little island, she will emerge slowly but surely to a clear consciousness of civilisation side by side with the race which imposed upon her a crown of thorns. The gain will be ours, and we should have granted Ireland her freedom decades ago. But Ireland, too, will gain immensely as her creative faculties unfold. As a Free State she has all that a people can have, and the time is nearing when Irishmen will gladly welcome the new dispensation which permits of their free growth as a corporate, ordered society.

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In this renascent Ireland we can place robust faith. Once the atmosphere there is cleared of political intrigue, espionage, hatred, and enemy tutelage, the Irish will return to the soil and to the new claims of life, of which they are their own masters at last. The Rebels' war was purely political; a dispute about a definition and more psychological than political. The war is ending—petering out for lack of enthusiasm. It never had a flag. Only an injunction fired it. A war which means nothing but war always ends disastrously—as the irreconcilables are to-day discovering—as the Germans discovered in 1914; as the French are slowly discovering in their spear-head tactics in the Ruhr. Like money, force is only a means. If it is used solely as a destructive agency, counter-force is the inevitable reaction; nor until the Governments in Europe are minded to act constructively will there be any peace on the Continent or in the world. It will be Mr. Cosgrave's test when arms are surrendered; it will be shortly Mussolini's in Italy; it will be ours in Europe. The lance is simply the symbol, the ancient phallus, of creation.

Always the question is, towards what end? Such was our inglorious mistake over Ireland. We had no purpose but supremacy. Thus the life-movement of Ireland withered and rebelled. It depopulated Ireland; drove a proud, brave, insular people into despair; finally, it fouled our own soul. We regain ours to re-establish Ireland's. It is a magnificent vindication of race sanity. The architecture of our civilisation is renewed. Rhythm returns. The moral forces of two fiercely clashing individualisms find natural and cultural attachments once more to work expressively of life in unison and harmony, in place of the old warring jealousies. And, as we view the scene, we are apparelled as the Spring—with a just hope; the hope that lies in natural impulse; in Man's essential grace of evolution; in reason. If we read aright these " faint runes of mystery," we can surely descry patterns of a new destiny calling on our joint civilisation to clear and profitable endeavour, conscious of a purpose. No longer of death, but of life. No longer twain, but one. Great Britain, " like a living thing, one and whole."

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Together, England and Ireland form the indestructible key to civilised evolution, for, literally, the future of Europe must depend upon the moral force and actions of this racial grouping as it bifurcates and transcends into the New World, perhaps still more into the " divine " adventure of Empire. The life-power is example. We shall win or fail on our example. Wealth will not be the integrating unit, nor in the end sympathy, if hearts are divided, as would inevitably have been the result had we continued in the futile course of subduing Ireland. There, the New World stood against us in the spirit, and the New World was right. But in binding up these wounds we have redressed the balance. Once more the English-speaking world has a common heart. As Ireland lapses into concord, our heritage is justified. The curtain rises. We have a great play to perform, Elizabethan in scope and freedom—to " strive on and finish the work we are in," the work of peace.

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Our chief difficulty is mechanism, for our mechanism is no longer attuned to the work in hand. A fantastic

example will illustrate the point. In Britain to-day we have 21,000,000 acres of land uncultivated; at the same time we have 1,300,000 unemployed. And while Parliament meekly considers this outrageous economic waste, huge schemes are afoot to emigrate tens of thousands out of the country into the very sparsely populated Dominions. Obviously, something is wrong here. If we are overpopulated, why in the name of common sense maintain 21,000,000 acres of perfectly good land idle? Already the land is starved and, as an industry, largely bankrupt. To emigrate land workers at this juncture is national suicide. Yet such is the idea keenly advocated by "big business." There is no manner of doubt but that our so-called agricultural problem is due chiefly to a total absence of policy. Railway rates are exorbitant; farmers refuse co-operation; we are under-sold by the intelligent foreigner. who organises production and distribution. Nearly all the pig, butter, eggs, and even fruit, consumed in London could be produced by the home counties on a proper system of co-operative farming, eliminating the middle-man. Our land is quite good. Why don't we do something? The answer is Mechanism. We are not governed. We govern ourselves by adventitious faction. It is nobody's job to interfere. The townsman is not interested; therefore, the politician who acts on votes and the newspaper which acts on readers, are both unconcerned. "Ship them off," is the cry. And so into the clutches of speculative Colonial land-holders the heroes of war will probably be hustled, while our own soil grows more impoverished and our food import bill mounts higher and higher. The only remedy for the land is an intelligent national policy. It does not exist, because the land is not a political catch-cry. Only 8 per cent. of the population are agriculturists. No political seats, no newspaper dividends hang on that. The mechanism of popularity demands a 30 per cent. interest. A catholic birth-control stares us in the face.

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The results are comic. All over the country able men flit to and fro looking for jobs and, as if to crown the present craze for imbecility, women compete in a perambulator race to Brighton with the babies inside. If this is

genius, God help us! One of the babies arrived vomiting blood. Yet Dr. Marie Stopes is prosecuted for advocating birth-control. Better drown the babies than perambulate them in a race to Brighton. Had any man run a dog-and-cart race to Brighton, all the societies in Britain would have prosecuted him. But babies, like the land, have no friends. That baby-race is symptomatic of our post-war mentality. Optimists these ladies possibly may be; but hardly helpful, even to breed a race of Tildens. Was it for this that women bashed in policemen's helmets? Where, oh where, are our lady police? What, in short, are we as a nation thinking about? The answer probably is Cash. How to get it? How to live? How to avoid going on the dole registry? Perhaps the strangest thing of all is the blindness of a nation of "shopkeepers" to look into the causes of its empty shop-windows. If our food bill is enormous and our land bankrupt, it is because we refuse to cultivate our own soil. If nearly a tenth of the population cannot find work, it is because the purchasing-power of Europe was destroyed by a peace which implied war, and is so acted upon by France, who sees in the measure of our purposelessness an opportunity to re-establish the old military hegemony of Louis XIV. On the other hand, if we want relief and happiness we must get a policy which will be the opposite of tranquillity.

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Perhaps the world's central post-war problem is money —how, that is, to move towards a measurement of values which is not in itself variable or speculative, the anomalous effects of which have actually reduced Europe to chaos. As it is, money is king. Money, through the credit system, has become such a power that to-day it controls prices instead of being the measurement of prices; thus while a vast part of the nation is out of work and has to be kept, banks multiply their buildings, like mushrooms, and real wealth has no value, as we can see in Germany. But this, it may be argued, is a technical disturbance. If so, it is all the more unscientific and ludicrous. A monetary system which can destroy real wealth is no longer a serviceable human instrument; it is a power inimical to all human progress. We can see the effects everywhere. All life is commercialised; all values are becoming commercial; all

standards are measured by the speculative quotations of profit, to the common detriment of service, utility, ideal, and progress. The measurement of money is the measure of public life. It dominates Parliament, Press, and politics. The question is no longer what a man is, but how much he has, what he can buy, and the successful speculator is boss. That is why men have turned from politics, regard the newspapers as entertainment, and women push perambulators to Brighton. Our standards have gone; in the absence of ideals we no longer have ideas; the business man meets us in the street and whispers the dread word—Utopian.

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Yet things have a way of righting themselves; thus if there is national lethargy, loss of faith, and widespread lowering of ideals, a new society within the whole is forming apart, unobserved, like an oasis in the desert. These are the creators, the artists, the lawgivers, and with them in no small part is the splendour of youth. These men, concentrating into groupings on Guild lines, are evolving a new life, new methods, new projections. Realising that between the insensate struggle of Capital and Labour, which is really a monetary struggle which those who have a call on money can always control, these associates of liberation are learning to take care of themselves vocationally and co-operatively on the lines of the Confederation of Art Workers so successfully started in France. This is a time of extremes. In the arts fully 80 per cent. must sink in the struggle as commercialism grows and the purchasing-power of the country becomes more and more concentrated in the hands of a few, and unless the artists of Britain can combine to defend their own interests their lot inevitably will grow harder. In this movement there lies a great hope, for their aims and ambitions are impersonal. They are the future groups of competents destined to play no mean part in the sociological state when at last mankind grows weary of the fraudulent mechanism which constricts it, and change has become evolutionarily imperative. That a radical change must eventually come is a certainty. Society, as left by the war, contains too many discrepancies, too palpable a disproportion, too inequitable a balance to assure the health essential to a nation's well-

being, and now many of the people are aware of it, are conscious of the flaws, are learning how to control them. In the monetary condition of the world as it is only the successful are right. The question is the measurement of what constitutes success. It is mob value. But this is death to all art. It is. As a man said when someone suggested Mr. Nemo as the next Premier, £20,000 artfully spent would advertise him into the required popularity.

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No nation can hope to prosper under such standards, still less to extricate itself from the bog of debt and penury bequeathed by the war. Any policy dependant upon advertisement must be a poor policy liable at any time to the freaks of fortune. Yet at present we have no other. Even the Tories who have faith and professions cannot evolve an attitude. Many of their elected to Parliament went there for the pleasure rather than for the rigour of the game, which has once more become serious, all too serious for most of them. But, outside, the nation looks on with soporific indifference. It knows that little will happen; that speeches mean only gestures; that at bottom only reputations are at issue; and, were it not for the bogey of the capital levy, probably two-thirds of the country would vote for Labour, if only to see what men who have convictions would make of the job; or, perhaps, one ought to say, could make of it, unless they summarily took in hand and reformed the monetary measurement of values and gave us a stable one. In such plight is Democracy. The modern Marx must deal with money.

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Probably the Germans have grasped this truth, which may explain their own mismanagement of currency. They know that the gold standard is no standard, can, that is, be re-established without a gold cover at all; has, in fact, nothing to do with gold or the amount of gold popularly supposed to be held in reserve to work the oracle. Internal purchasing-power is the key of the exchange, and this is a game in numbers. When, finally, Europe sets about sane restoration, currency systems will not much signify. Germany can obliterate her war debt with a Bill and legislate for the loss of real securities. She may evolve a new currency basis of her own, which, provided it functions

within the capitalist system, would serve. France also has no illusions on this subject. She has had her assignats. She is not afraid of a second dose. Her policy is power, ours is finance. It is not a sound fundament for an Entente. While we disarm, France arms. While we discuss the Ruhr from the angle of finance, France thinks only of security; how, that is, she can incapacitate Germany for ever. The problem is one of civilisation. It is peace or war, and in either case we are vitally concerned. All Europe is involved, and in great part our future. If France is to be permitted to cut out the Rhineland from Germany, another world war will be a biological necessity. Nor will any device such as placing the province under a League of Nations controlled by France in any conceivable way prevent a repetition of the recent conflagration.

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Our so-called " boom " is merely the repercussion of the Ruhr policy, which benefits coal and " heavies," thus explaining the voluble enthusiasm displayed by whilom Liberal iron-masters. They profit. But Britain was not so created and cannot so survive. Our real power is derived from the world's toleration of our historic contribution to humanity; we are tolerated because hitherto we have been about the best, setting the highest example, ruling through liberty, with one single exception. All Europe awaits the word of deliverance, which can only come from us. In time it will come. Already a majority would support it, and M. Loucheur made a capital mistake if he reported to his master in an adverse sense. Not that there is really any difference of view between M. Poincaré and his reputed successor. The former thinks legally, the latter financially. M. Poincaré is positive in his approach, M. Loucheur is casuistic. To both, the Rhineland is the irreducible minimum. All talk on this side of a reasonable financial adjustment acceptable by France betrays fundamental ignorance of French intentions, which are, first and foremost, rooted in power.

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Those who imagine that France's Ruhr policy does not matter to us are tyros or dreamers, and—profiteers. What France does in the Ruhr will set the forces of European policy for the next fifty years, in which alignment we are

involuntarily enmeshed. Nothing will alter this, nor can any Government here continue to ignore it. If Europe cannot summon up the moral courage to order France out of the Ruhr in the name of civilisation, we return, all of us, to war conditions, and our only sane policy is militarism and a prodigious air force. We are face to face with the balance of power again. No League of Nations can be formed on that principle, no country can afford to disarm on the strength of it. Here we shall be hit in the wind. Our standards will decline, unemployment will be permanent, and war will be the settled outlook. That is really why the present Government is crumbling. The people know this. They want peace. They do not mean to fight again and pay for their own trenches. The Ruhr presents no mystery to a Europe in ruin. It means this way or that, thraldom or liberation. "The souls of the living are the beauty of the world," wrote Bacon. Our souls cannot be filched from us; that is as much as one may dare to profess. Yet it will suffice to all who have faith in Britain and her destiny. New thoughts are teeming. Youth is astir. The country, despite its absurd economic inequities, is palpably capable, moving slowly towards a synthesis of thought and action, internally and externally. The goal is liberation. And the means will not be found through the antics, vanities, and empirics of marionette politicals strung to the egoisms of trusts and money, but through the instrumentality of the creators, liberators, interpreters, and operators of the new meanings, faculties, functions, and services of life within the co-operative commonwealth of men and nations, as in the gloom and discord, misery and despair of anarchy it gathers serene and religious consciousness.

India

By Fredoon Kabraji

SHE is the flower of thy sorrow, my Father; she passes through the night of her virtue. I have seen the shadows in her eyes; in those holy shadows, Master, I have seen her soul open like the meadow-flower made deathless by one little diamond dew-drop; in the magic of her voice have I heard the age-dimmed echoes of her forest-chants. In the music of her form, O my Lord, have I not seen her soul sway in cadences of bounty and famine?

She is thy servant of sorrow, my Lord; she passes through the fire of her virtue. Night after night she brings her insults to gather at thy feet in a music of unmeaning worship. Thy *Law* breathes through her clouds of pain, a gathering silence of thunder, to break upon her death at last in a fierce Lightning of Deliverance—even as now through the groaning earth, as through her children—swells thine inmost Purpose to sigh forth into green seas of Thanksgiving, at the first touch of thy Rain.

She is a wanderer in her own unknown; her ways are hidden in the Sun of thy Wisdom, O Infinite!
Where the wind is wild, and the dust blows through word and deed, she has her way, she knows not whither!
When thy Thunder comes to slay the wind, and thy Rain lays low the dust, . . . she shall know;
when thy Lightning gleams in thy fierce Mercy she shall find the road!

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Books.

ART.

THE WARES OF THE MING DYNASTY. By R. L. HOBSON. Benn Bros 4 *guineas* net.

THIS is a collector's book, of quite specific and definite value, with 128 illustrations, of which the eleven coloured ones are particularly successful. The beautiful Ming porcelain work has of recent years awakened wide interest as the choicer products have been discovered. The Ming porcelains were made for the Imperial Court, and are very beautiful as well as varied, and in this luxurious volume the subject is gone into with erudition, for the Ming reigns were the classic periods of porcelain manufacture. It possessed a peculiar technique and quite essential features, the chief of which was the use of pictorial and polychrome designs. Blue played an important part, also white, and the thickness of glaze was a characteristic, the glaze having a remarkable lustre. The old Chinese potters were extraordinarily skilful in the technique of firing and the use of colours. Thus the Mohammedan blue

could not be used alone on account of its tendency to run. The Mohammedan blue probably came from Persia. The whole subject of this glaze work is fascinating, and in this book a scientific attempt is made to differentiate the true Ming work from the countless specimens of pottery which are sold as Ming. Even to the general public this work is interesting.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF MY ELDERS. By ST. JOHN G. ERVINE. Geo. Allen and Unwin. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

ALPHABETICALLY arranged, "A.E.," Arnold Bennett, G. K. Chesterton, John Galsworthy, George Moore, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and W. B. Yeats are the elders of this charmingly argumentative set of appreciations in which Mr. Ervine reasons gently but penetratingly with his august contemporaries about their art and their method —sometimes raising his voice a bit, when the elders are Irish, like himself, to give them and their friends a hearty tongue dressing, or breaking off to give an apposite reminiscence, a vivid glimpse of look or manner which illuminates. This book of reasoned criticisms is excellent reading, first because Mr. Ervine is a close observer and clear reasoner, and next because the subjects of the papers are such as to stretch his mind to its heights and depths. Mr. Ervine can be angry with false gods and wrong ideals, but he altogether escapes bad manners towards his friends; a little gentle chaff about Mr. Moore's concealed birthday is the limit of his pleasant malice. Mr. Shaw's conscious attitude of prophet before the camera is *proxime accessit*, but the splendid generosity of his appreciation of their diverse genius is not disfigured by the belittling touch. Shaw, Wells, Bennett, Moore, Chesterton, "A.E.," and Yeats would seem to be the order of his estimation, but this is perhaps merely impertinent inference. Lots of other people creep into the page to point a moment or complete a picture.

THE MINOANS. By GEORGE GLASGOW. Jonathan Cape. 4*s.* 6*d.* net.

A NEAT and useful little book about the Minoans. If you don't know who the Minoans were you are a back number. They invented sewers and water pipes, *décolleté* dress for ladies, teacups (though they didn't drink tea from them), and the European idea of Woman. Sir Arthur Evans has been busy about them since the century began and has unearthed enough to change all our ideas upon the origins of classic Greece and European civilisation. Knossos in Crete has yielded to his researches most remarkable results with many inscriptions in an unknown language not yet deciphered. Homer's stories about Theseus and Ariadne, the Minotaur and the labyrinth, Bellerophon and others allude to this bygone people, who fused with the Northern invaders to produce those wonder-people the classic Greeks. In this little book of Mr. Glasgow's—written "to be read in an hour"—you will find a brief summary of discoveries to date in a clear and readable form, with references sufficient for a larger study if desired. This is just the little book that the average intelligent have needed, to expand chance references in newspapers and other literary scraps on the subject. We can't all be archæologists, but we don't like to miss fundamental

facts in discovery which go far to solve the riddle of the beginnings of European arts and ideals, therefore this succinct little book is most welcome, although more pictures would add to its value.

DE SENECTUTE. By FREDERIC HARRISON. Fisher Unwin. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

MR. F. S. MARVIN has contributed an introductory note to the last words of almost the last of the great Victorians. The book is remarkable for its catholicity of taste and thought, for its clearness of view, breadth of interest, and testimony to the vitality of age. Perhaps the most interesting chapter is the historical essay on Constantinople. Mr. Harrison was contemplating at the time of his death a short history of Constantinople, a city which had always exercised a strong charm to him. It is interesting to note his recapitulation of Comte's philosophy, which closes this book. The religion of humanity, if it has lost its cult as a religion, may be said to have become a world conception of life, and it is notable that to-day humanism is likely to supersede the old French term, Positivism, which in England gave rise to such ridiculous misconceptions. The keynote is moral harmony, and Mr. Harrison closes on this note which was the guiding idea of his whole life. There is an arresting essay on the art of Translation, and the book abounds in literary *aperçus* which reveal the extraordinary range of the writer's knowledge, sympathies, and enthusiasms.

FICTION.

MISS MANNERING. By W. PETT RIDGE. Methuen. 7*s.* 6*d.*

MR. PETT RIDGE'S brisk Jinglesque method of telling a tale has the advantage of giving a fairly complex biography in reasonable space. In terse and pointed paragraphs, full of action and local colour, he tells in this volume the story of a young country girl who comes to town to seek her fortune. Her arrival coincides with the pandemonium of Mafeking night, and her progress through all the grades of a City restaurant enables her creator to give her a great many well-remembered backgrounds which the mature stockbroker will find delight in verifying. *Miss Mannering* is rather a series of scenes presenting Dickensy characters with that sort of witty brevity of description and commentary which Mr. Pett Ridge has made his own. It is the little thumbnail portraits of landladies, charwomen, waiters, policemen, and other supers, as well as the slightly more elaborate sketches of customers and associates in business, and of the heroine's friends and relations, that give to this story its quality of picturesque actuality. A story packed with keen and kindly observation of City and suburban manners.

THE DESERT HORIZON. By E. L. GRANT WATSON. Jonathan Cape. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

AUSTRALIA—that continent from another planet, with its fauna and flora strangely differentiated—awaits the epic treatment which Mr. Grant Watson bids fair to provide. In *The Mainland* we saw something of the overwhelming, vast indifference and unchanging age of the northern desert country, a theme to which the present volume is dedicated together with the reactions of the country itself upon the blank page of a boy's expanding mind. Written with deliberation and sincerity, *The Desert Horizon* comes to surround the reader and to make

him feel the movings of something implicit in its red dust and dry sunlight—something fatal, pitiless, but somehow lovely. It is this power of evoking the presence of the impalpable which gives to Mr. Grant Watson's work its grip of the reader's mind—a power better developed in this story than in any of his previous studies of tropical life. The Boy Martin O'Brien grows to love the solitude in which his being is steeped; he slowly awakens to the disturbing conflict of sex and eventually goes off to find his mate where men and women congregate in the imprisoning vulgarity of towns. Fate is very kind to this dumb youth, who has never learned to express his wordless longings and delights, and we leave him upon the brink of the unknown with his young town-bred wife at his side, with a promise from the author of another meeting, or another phase. More will be welcome of this grave and admirable quality.

THE SEVEN AGES OF WOMAN. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. Martin Secker. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

THIS full-length portrait of a woman opens in the year '69 and carries us on to the present day, bringing its subject full circle from recollections of her own childhood to recognition of her granddaughter's claim upon happiness. Mary's life story tells us about an average woman in a world of chance and vicissitude, subject to the tyranny of circumstance, suffering the disappointments, shocks, and submissions common to us all. There is nothing in her life story to make us wonder or envy—a commonplace figure, in short, which Mr. Mackenzie has made as human and interesting as any life story well told must be. It is as though he tested his power of narrative by deliberate choice of mediocrity in subject—the painting and not the sitter, the art is all. It is to some extent a challenge to his own powers and the reader's intelligence; even more exacting than his *Altar Steps*, which had some glamour of specialisation to help carry its weight. As in that story, art wins the day by dint of the artist's personality—an unexpanded childhood, a broken love story, marriage by default, a disappointing family scattered by war's bereavements, loneliness, and even the demise of the worshipped cat, do not quench the spark of persistency which is in this heroine of *The Seven Ages*. Mr. Mackenzie has lavished his lively mind upon this serious, almost epic subject with his customary success. It is to the average sensual man more than readable, to the impatient a bit too long for its breadth.

THEY CALL ME CARPENTER. By UPTON SINCLAIR. Werner Laurie. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

WHEN the church-window Christ comes down to comfort the young American club man, who has been biffed over the head in a strike row, Mr. Upton Sinclair makes an unwonted concession to the proprieties. So when at length this robed and haloed figure returns to its original ecclesiastical location, failure is frankly admitted. All that comes between in the activities of the Christus amongst revolutionary labour delegates, cinema stars and producers, newspaper reporters out for sensation, and others is just a bit of fevered imagination padded with transliterated Bible phrases and decorated with reconstituted gospel protagonists—all very quaint and American, but hampered by the robes

and halo which bowdlerise the story for the pious tastes of hereditary puritans here and there. Mr. Sinclair has in short written, with his hands tied behind him, a quite suggestive and improving bit of depolarised Christianity, paying tribute alike to the rationalist and to the faithful. Comstockery triumphs again at the expense of Upton Sinclair.

MEN LIKE GODS. By H. G. WELLS. Cassell. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

WHATEVER one may think about the decadence of the novel, Mr. H. G. Wells holds his course in the range of imaginative fiction, once more landing us in Utopia. This time it is the tired Liberal editor who benefits by the change. His holiday becomes a rhapsody, due to an Einsteinian projection, and the admirable man finds himself, with a week-end party of earthly notables, spatchcocked on to a new plane where education is the central idea of well-being. The Utopians are "through" with our planetary troubles. Such things as Governments, politics, policemen, armies, newspapers, marriage, and advertisements do not exist. They are Godlike folk, spacious in mind, splendid in type, spatial in every fact. The Liberal editor is liberal enough to understand, but his companions do not, and so an amusing war breaks out between the strangers and the Godlike, ending in swift, dynamic retribution. Finally, the Liberal editor is switched back to earth—to work for the Utopian world. This kind of thing is always difficult to do, and it is successful. No dull page. It is neither Jules Verne nor Oliver Lodge. There are delightful vistas. Utopia does not mean Ghostland, it means practical land. There it is, within our grasp, though the tame Tiger seems somewhat out of the picture.

HISTORY.

SIMON DE MONTFORT. By SOMERSET BATEMAN. Cornish Bros., Ltd. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

A BOOK on Simon de Montfort excites not unnatural interest, for the thirteenth century was a thrilling one, and, popularly, Simon was the Baron of the Charter. But this is a peculiar monograph. It begins with King John's death; Magna Charta is not mentioned, and Simon is not the historical Simon of Runnymede, but his son, whose exploits are concerned with Henry III. This is disappointing enough, and the disillusion grows, for it is difficult to follow events or understand them; the author writes in the spirit of the old conventional school which writes of Crusaders as *preux chevaliers*. One example: he just mentions Simon's Papal campaign in Southern France; writes of "a form of heresy" (is the author a Catholic?) which, not having yielded to St. Dominic or St. Bernard, had to be crushed by force. What are the real facts? They are that in the Provence man had at last revolted from the millenary of sacerdotal darkness of the material age. These rebels were the Troubadours—the founders of modern poetry; the creators of Mary, and, therefore, abominated by Rome; the first men to think of love of women as apart from the physical. These splendid people were massacred by the Papal soldiery under Simon—some 500,000 men, women, and children. Such is the truth. The author passes all this by. He is, indeed, as historian, uninteresting; as chronicler, confused and almost hopelessly old-fashioned.

BOOKS

MEMOIRS.

MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE. By RONALD A. KNOX. Methuen. 7*s.* 6*d.*

OPAL, LADY PORSTOCK—whose memoirs, 1915-1972, are the subject-matter of this jolly pasquinade—is one of those dateless women of the sort that one calls "a perfect dear." Kindly, knowing, and guileless (as far as is consistent with womanhood), she tells, in level voice and simple phrase, just those things about her world which would interest a receptive and modest mind. This gives splendid point to the delightful irony of an imagined society with all our post-war foibles, fads, and fashions exquisitely enlarged and expanded. The entire avoidance of bitterness and its substitution by daring and delicate humour (broad fun and subtle touches of penetrating wit) lifts this delightful artifice above the malice of satire into an atmosphere of healing laughter; even the apologetics of the inimitable Canon Dives and other ecclesiastics, male and female—in which, as might be expected of a parson, the author revels *in extenso*—will hardly wring any clerical withers, although they are the subtlest and most elaborately artistic caricatures in a book which alternates delicate allusions with the robustly humoresque. The payment of the war debt to America in the currency of dukedoms, marquisates, and so on, and the establishment of European peace upon a coupon system dominated by Ludgate Circus, is happy farce, and Mr. Knox does not disdain the expedients of cumulative repetition, of spoof headings, of smart parody, and all the machinery of the humorist; but this is a humorist with a difference, so full of correspondence with his environment that his touches of allusive fun go as deep as criticism and apologetics and dance lightly across the whole scheme of common life. There are, for example, a hundred and forty names in his index of personalities mentioned, and each of them represents a facet of the social complex, many of them are elaborated, and all are exquisitely apposite. *Memories of the Future* is, in short, criticism without tears, powder in so much jam that its medicinal property is almost unrecognised. A book of irresistible ridicule, so spontaneous, with all its brilliant elaboration, that it takes a place apart and puts Mr. Knox into the front rank of living wits; but, to be for a moment captious, where did Opal, Lady Porstock, pick up her Latin?

AN AMBASSADOR'S MEMOIRS. By MAURICE PALEOLOGUE. Vol. I. Hutchinson and Co. 18*s.* net.

THOUGH the French Ambassador to Russia is studiously careful to avoid pitfalls, his book is interesting, for it is well written and he sees things comprehensively; in particular his (undiplomatic) criticisms of Rasputin and Russia generally are informative. He opens in July, 1914. M. Poincaré is arriving to meet the Tsar; it is a great gala scene. He comes and conquers. The Tsar beams. Notably, M. Poincaré passes down the lines of the minor Ministers, ignoring them all, save the Serbian Minister. This was ten days before war broke out. Still, these early pages reflect clearly the object of M. Poincaré's visit to Russia in that fateful week. As the Grand Duchess Anastasia said (July 22nd), "there's going to be war." The French were very anxious to impress upon Russia that Germany was to be

forced into taking the initiative over a question like Serbia, which was not a French or British interest; the Russians were specially anxious to obtain Britain's active alliance. M. Paléologue ignores the fact of Russia's secret mobilisation, unknown to the Tsar, which compelled Germany to react, but he hints quite enough for us to see that peace would have been perfectly obtainable but for the Russian persistence in arming, thus prostrating diplomatic action. Viviani's last words were to assure Russia that France "would meet all her obligations." It was this knowledge that led Russia to proceed with her mobilisation.

POETRY AND THE DRAMA.

BITTER HERBS. By C. A. DAWSON-SCOTT. Heinemann. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

WHETHER *vers libre* has come to stay and poetry is destined to divest herself of that golden harness which she so cherishingly and deliberately assumed in the days of her re-birth among the Troubadours is a moot question. Poetical values and forms are so largely a matter of shifting and varying taste that time alone can pronounce upon what in them is permanent and essential. Personally, I believe that present-day *vers libre*, if not the term of an artistic achievement, is a momentous contribution to the development of new poetical forms that will combine the musical resources of imposed and difficult harmonies with the freer flow and flexible adaptivity of unfettered expression. Mrs. Dawson-Scott's verse is, at least, a demonstration that liberty is not equivalent to careless licence and unstudied facility. It is richly wrought and chastened craftsmanship, uniformly sustained in the high-tuned pitch of its opulence and aptness. Its harmonies have an elemental quality which could scarcely be looked for in formal rhyme, as of the musical death and transformation of Atlantic waves amid the canorous echoes of Cornish caves. Her inspiration has that quality, so rare, alas! in these days, of being unforced and unsought; it springs directly from life, and has the flavour of its sweet and bitter herbs; and it is too rich in its own right to seek the loans of adventitious pose and scenario. Mrs. Dawson-Scott's poems are a challenge to the critics of *vers libre* which they cannot afford to ignore.

THE DESIGNS OF LEON BAKST FOR "THE SLEEPING PRINCESS." Preface by ANDRE LEVINSON. Benn Bros., Ltd. 6 *guineas* net.

THIS is a tome meet for Mr. Wells's Utopia, almost too sumptuous for mere man. It comprises facsimile reproductions of Bakst's designs for the costumes of Tschaikovsky's ballet which, as music, was rather disappointing, and one can only say that if this luxurious book was worth doing, at the price, it must be because it pays. It certainly is a marvel of colour, of exotic fantasy, of architectural display. After Bakst, what? What is left? What can we get more, unless we return to simplicity? We owe much to this dreamer of clothes. He has established a new tradition of stage setting which has thereby clothed the dance with fresh life. Indeed, he is the Greek chorus of the Ballet, the modern Byzantine emperor of the theatre.